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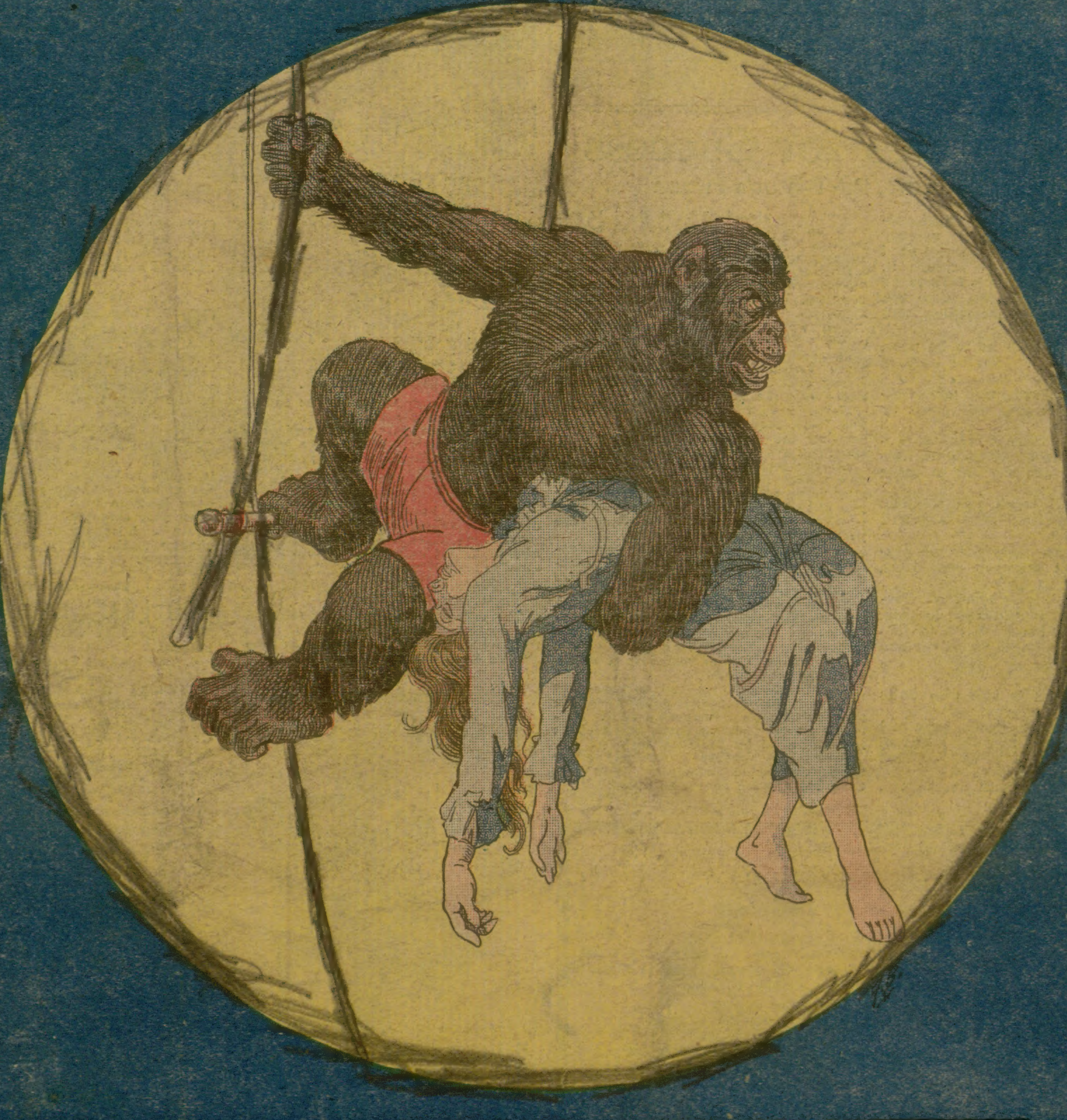

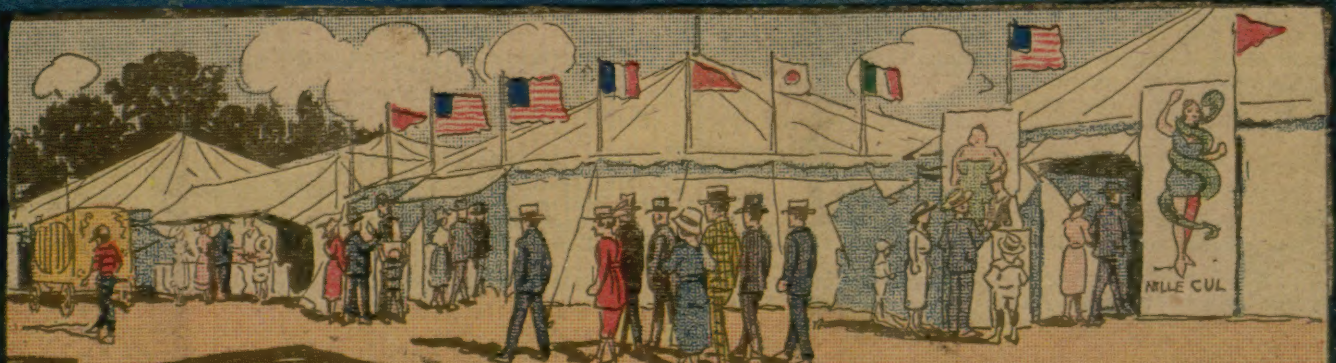

THE VIXEN
— A Story of the Circus

CHICAGO LEDGER

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Simple Rules for Success

By Hank Doolittle, the Editor's Friend

THE fundamental principle of success is that if you are already quite prosperous and do not need further success, you will achieve it. Therefore, all that you need is to be rich, powerful and independent when you start out. Then everything will come your way.

If you are so foolish as to be poor, you will remain so. Wealth accrues only to the rich.

Always work hard and conscientiously. Some one else will profit by your toil.

Remember that success requires persistent effort. The effort must be sustained until you are too old to enjoy its fruits.

Experience will teach you wisdom. Experience is knowledge of life acquired too late to be of use.

Success requires singleness of purpose. You must stick to one thing, even if it refuses to stick to you.

Directed aim is highly essential. Concentrate upon what you can do best, even if you do not know what it is.

Never give up—especially if you are beating a dead mule, or trying to make twice two five.

Everything comes to him who waits until it arrives.

One excellent rule: Work, save and invest. Always save something out of your earnings, even if living expense be greater than income.

There is plenty of room at the top. Every bank president must die. If you wait patiently you may succeed to his position. Within fifty years some of your competitors will also drop out.

Do not be discouraged when you see others profit by good fortune, luck, favoritism, discrimination, corruption or nepotism.

You would grab the chance if you could. So would I.

Remember, however, that merit is more virtuous than all these things. Every one will confirm your opinion—and every one will ignore it.

Never resign from a position until you have secured a new one, even if hunting the new one requires all your time.

Do not feel hurt if a manager treats you coldly at the first interview. He may have a direct interest in keeping you out of the firm. You can get your revenge on other applicants twenty-five years later, when you have his job.

Always be punctual with appointments. You can occupy the time profitably with reading or meditation while waiting for the other man.

To be happily married is a great help, but do not mix amorous affairs with business. Remember the words of the philosopher: Lovemaking is an agreeable pastime, but marriage is a remunerative profession.

Follow these rules and fortune will be yours in abundant measure—when you are no longer interested in it. Success will most surely come, when effort is superseded by indifference.

Learn and observe carefully every tried and tested principle. You will then know what course to avoid.

A Pocket Edition

By Ida McIntosh Zumstein

You are six feet two, my father; I am five feet one;
I, a disappointing daughter, when you wished a son;
But Life stole your face and manner, gave them both to me—
Made me your second self, for all the world to see;
Bade me set my little footprints lovingly in yours;
Made of you my sun and stars, the while my life endures;
Gave me to you for a wistful, little trailing ghost;
Made me know in every instinct what would stir you most.

All your special, strong temptations are my greatest ones,
(There are risky traits for daughters that are safe for sons).
When I see, within your eyes, that worried Memory wakes,
Walk I very circumspectly then for both our sakes.
Sister Jane is cold and sinless, Sister Edith, mild;
And they say our little brother is his mother's child;
But when evening finds me creeping, eager, to your breast,
I can guess without your telling why you love me best.

Ahead of Her Story.

LITTLE BETTY had memorized several of the stories in her fairy book, and was fond of pretending to read them.

One night she was seated upon the lap of a visitor, affecting to read one of her favorite tales about some wooden dolls.

She was proceeding with great enthusiasm for several moments, when the guest interrupted her by saying:

"But, my dear child, I don't see anything about dolls on that page."

"I know it," she said promptly and sheepishly. "I was reading on the wrong page."

Then, turning over several pages, she concluded:

"It's over here!"

◆ ◆ ◆

Barber College Yell.

"SO YOU graduated from a barber college? What is your college yell?"

"Cut his lip, cut his jaw, leave his face raw, raw, raw!"

Force of Habit.

"PEOPLE are so used to paying war taxes that it has become as much a habit as eating and drinking," said Sid Grauman, "and the other night I dreamed a dream that no doubt was true.

"St. Peter looked with wonder at the two rusty coppers which the passing soul had dropped into his hand.

"'Why, my good man,' he asked, 'what is this for?'

"'War tax,' murmured the soul gloomily as it passed through the heavenly gates."

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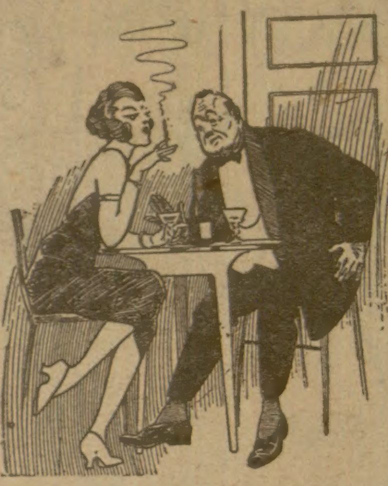
Another Button Gone.

A MAN named Button, who lived in Tennesee, owned a lot in the local cemetery. He died and his wife notified the gravedigger to open a space in the family lot. This was done. A week or two after the burial Mrs. Button received this bill from the grave digger:

"One Button hole—$3."

Hot Off the Jokesmith's Anvil

The Business Woman.



"Marry me and I'll make every blessed thing I have over to you."

"It sounds all right—but—will I have to keep you?"

◆

Hopeless.

"Why did you let that new salesman go?"

"He was incompetent."

"Yes?"

"Why, that fellow couldn't sell a motor car to a man who had just struck oil."

◆

A Question of Today.

"What are your hopes for the future?" asked the solemn man.

"I have none just now," replied the youth. "Tomorrow is my girl's birthday and I am worrying about the present."

◆

Ruinous.

"Will the honeymoon last thru life, dear?" she asked.

"No," he answered, checking up his accounts, "not unless I become a millionaire."

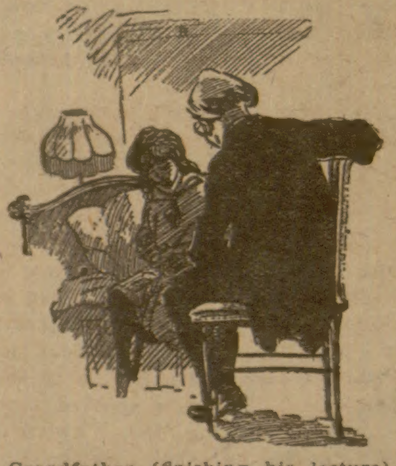
◆

CONSOLING.

The years play topsy-turvy tricks,
As often has been told one;
The plain young woman gets in time
To be a pretty old one.

◆

Unselfishness.



Grandfather (finishing his lecture)—Would you like me to pray for you?

Rose—Well, if you think God's very miserable about me, it might cheer Him up.

◆

No Place to Go.

"Poor man, he has no place to go."

"What do you mean?"

"His wife is driving him to drink, and he has hard work finding it."

◆

Resignation Accepted!

Mr. Assistant—I want to tender my resignation. I——

Mr. Boss—Never mind making it tender. Make it brief.

◆

Good Nature.

"He's a good-natured man."

"That so?"

"Yes. He taught his wife to drive the car and didn't once lose his temper."

◆

The Real Objection.

He—And so your father objects to my calling.

She—Oh, no. What he objects to is your not having any calling.

◆

Both Bashful and Shy.

"Owens seems a bashful sort of man."

"Bashful! Why, he's too bashful to meet his obligations!"

◆

Not Encouraging.

"I'm sorry there is not more closet accommodation in your room, Norah," explained the lady in the suburbs to the new cook.

"Don't worry, mum. I never stays long enough in one place to unpack me trunks."

◆

An Irrisistible Attraction.

Agent—Why not take out a policy for $50,000 in favor of your wife?

Victim—I have no wife?

Agent—You will have pretty soon after the news gets out.

◆

Careful Maid.

Mistress—Why, Bridget, what on earth are you doing with all the broken dishes on the shelf?

Bridget—Sure, mum, yez told me Oi was to replace everyone Oi broke.

◆

On Time.

"He believes in being on time, doesn't he?"

"Yes, he even buys things that way!"

◆ ◆ ◆

Brain Teasers.

Charade.

97—My first is a pet name for "Margaret"; my second is a boy's delight when it comes out of the oven; my whole is a chattering bird.

Acrostic Sentence.

98—1. Unharmed. 2. "East or west"—what is "best." 3. A preposition. 4. A harbor. When these four words have been rightly determined their primals will be found to spell something which would make the statement created by the words true.

Changed Heads.

99—I am a fresh and pleasant time of day; change my head and bread is made from me; change again and I am tattered; change again and I have been long in use; change again and I have just come into the world; change again and music is made from me; change again and I am forsaken and friendless.

Four-word Square.

100—1. To pierce with sword or knife.
2. Duration; period.
3. A prophet well known in Hebrew history.
4. The highest degree of good.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

93—Decapitations.

1. Spat-pat-at. 2. Plaid-laid-aid. 3. Grace-race-ace. 4. Grate-rate-ate.

94—Double Acrostic.

ImP. NosE. KeeN.

95—Beheadings and Curtailings.

Browning. 1. Com-bat-ant. 2. Cor-rod-ing. 3. Dis-own-ing. 4. Dar-win-ian. 5. Kid-nap-ped. 6. Pol-ice-man. 7. Sub-nor-mal. 8. Ima-gin-ary.

96—Four-word Square.

B A R E
A R E A
R E S T
E A T S

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

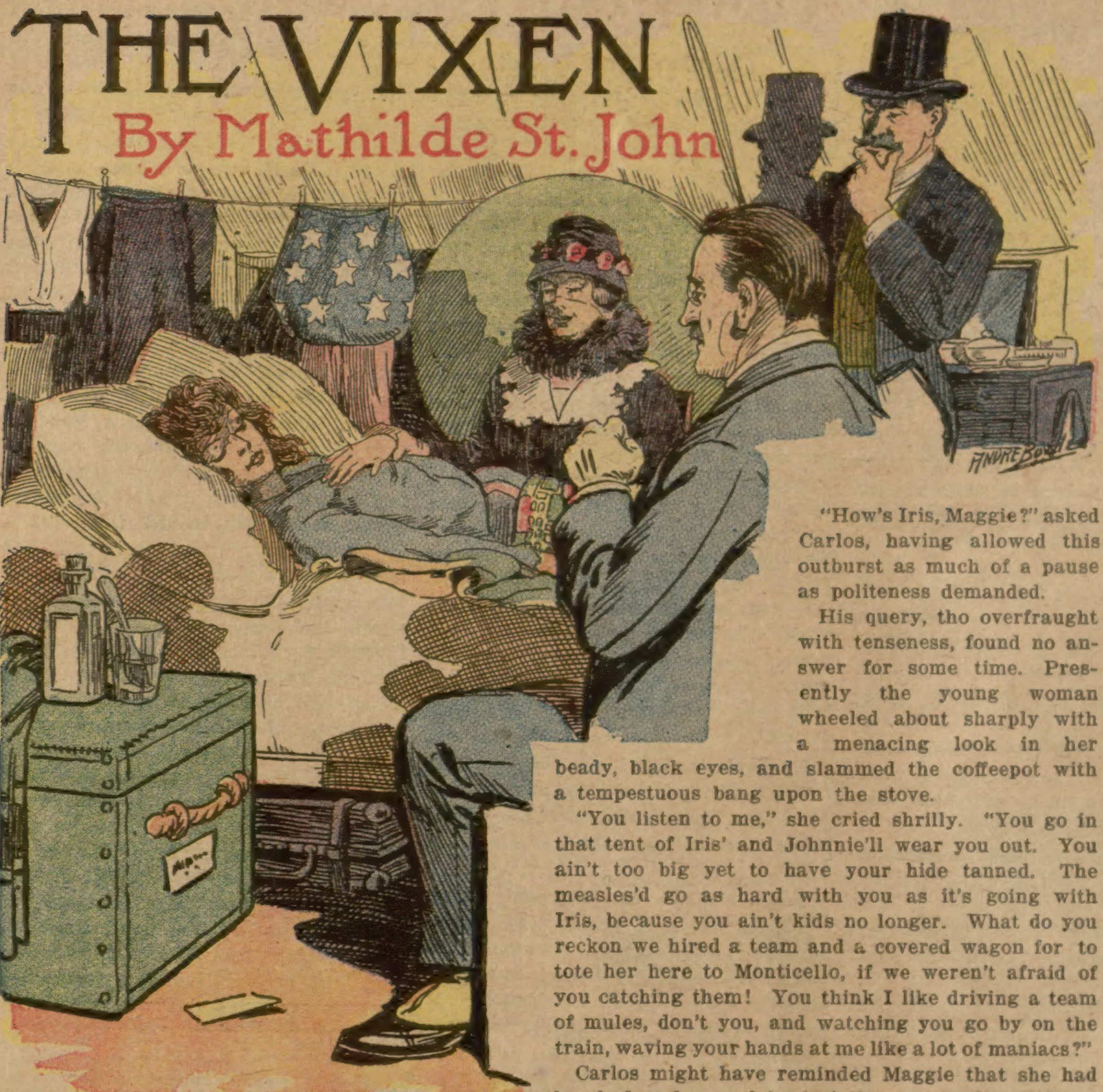
Have you tried the new 10c package?
Dealers now carry both;
10 for 10c,
20 for 20c.
It's toasted.

LUCKY STRIKE
CIGARETTE

Guaranteed by
The American Tobacco Co.
INCORPORATED

THE VIXEN

By Mathilde St. John



"Don't You Understand, Miss Iris, That You Are to Get Well and Come East With Us?"

THE Pringle Circus had pulled stakes out of the Southern town of Clarksdale and were driving them in Monticello. Ropes lay in gigantic puzzles everywhere; obstinate canvas was clapping and flapping in a high wind and the air rang with the sound of hammers from ballies and platforms. Every member of the company was straining nerve and muscle to make up the time lost in transit and get ready for performance that evening.

It was always a trying era for Carlos. He had been working all the sun-bleached afternoon digging "tunnels;" little canals running along under the tent-sides as a precaution against wind and rain. While digging "tunnels" in a scorching sun in a low country for many, many hours at a stretch is not over-pleasant; it was not this that made it a trying ordeal to Carlos, but the high temperature of people's tempers.

Of the four people to whom he gave his allegiance, Elizabeth was entirely out of this question. She was always gloomy and crossly sensible; it was a settled thing of her forty-odd years. Pitching in a new town or not pitching made no difference in her. But when it came to Johnnie, her husband! And Maggie, her sister! And George! The natural sullenness of the first was churned to a sputtering wrath. And young Maggie, a Mecca of reason at all other times, became lost to the fair quality altogether and was downright snappy, and terribly hard to get along with on the whole. Her husband, George, the only oasis of real mirth in the entire crowd, vanished completely.

Carlos, whose work had taken him around the main tent, came at sundown into the warm, gloomy kitchen-tent where Maggie was frying fishcakes. He stood just within the doorway, a dark-eyed, soft-haired lad in his mid-teens, slim and tall, with a look of the gypsy upon him. He held a hand tightly upon his bare arm.

"Give me m' coffee now, Maggie?" he asked in the pleading Louisiana accent. "Vixen bit me again and it took m' appetite."

"Where's George?" demanded Maggie, fiercely, pouring a black tincupful from a huge pot and setting it down in front of the lad. "I'd like to know where George is always when we're pitching tent. Husband! That lazy dog my husband! He never driven a stake in his life, or tied a rope. He'll slink in for his supper, tho, directly the work's done."

"How's Iris, Maggie?" asked Carlos, having allowed this outburst as much of a pause as politeness demanded.

His query, tho overfraught with tenseness, found no answer for some time. Presently the young woman wheeled about sharply with a menacing look in her beady, black eyes, and slammed the coffeepot with a tempestuous bang upon the stove.

"You listen to me," she cried shrilly. "You go in that tent of Iris' and Johnnie'll wear you out. You ain't too big yet to have your hide tanned. The measles'd go as hard with you as it's going with Iris, because you ain't kids no longer. What do you reckon we hired a team and a covered wagon for to tote her here to Monticello, if we weren't afraid of you catching them! You think I like driving a team of mules, don't you, and watching you go by on the train, waving your hands at me like a lot of maniacs?"

Carlos might have reminded Maggie that she had laughed and waved back fully as friendly as they, but, of course, Carlos knew she didn't mean a word she said during tent-pitching time. He quaffed from his tin cup in silence until Maggie again deigned to speak.

"So the old gorilla Vixen bitten you, did she?"

"Right thru the canvas. I was on the outside of the tent and I accidently pushed the canvas between the bars of her little old cage on the inside, with my elbow."

"That's a dangerous animal, that Vixen. I've always said somebody's going to get killed by that monkey. They're all dangerous, those big orang-outangs and gorillas, but Vixen's the worst of the lot, now that Job's dead. God'll mighty, but it took the old gorilla Job to cow 'em all—Vixen with the rest. He bitten her once; like to tore her cheek off. That was when you and Iris were babies, but she got a lesson that lasted till Job died."

"She's bad enough for me. She's a sure-nuff vixen, alright. Like to nipped m' elbow clean off!"

Maggie shuffled about for some minutes at her frying. After awhile she suddenly remembered it was tent-pitching still. "'Like to'!" she mocked inconsistently. "'Clean ofe!' Ain't you never going to learn? 'Sure-nuff! Like to! Clean ofe!'" But at this juncture her husband George made a slinking entrance and Carlos discreetly cleared.

The lad walked forth into the fading light. All about were tents, now showing like parchment lanterns with silhouetted figures never still. The show tents loomed many rods to the south and were paled off. About him rose the gray, deserted sleeping tents, proclaiming themselves mostly by their smell of horse-liniment and gasoline. A refreshing dusk breeze was abroad and Carlos caught it full on the brow. He clung to the touch of the breeze as one condemned—condemned to the circus. For life was fast growing in upon him narrowly. For many years he had been watching and comparing. There were lads and lassies whom watchful parents brought to the circus. After viewing the performance they returned to individual homes, each to a great sanctum dedicated to his rearing. These young people had been tended and allowed to learn. He knew. Two lifetimes had been devoted to each of their upbringings. They came to watch him once a year, went their laughing ways, came again the next year with all their year's difference upon them. Carlos could see them change little by little, see it in their faces; in their sweet, changing manner toward him. First they had envied him, their little hands fluttering like leaves over his wee costume as he stood, feet apart, baby arms akimbo and little face shining with pride and good-will. Now, they were the ones to be envied, and the fingers of his spirit often fluttered over them, equipped as they were to explore the world and to conquer it.

Carlos' comparing was not a moody, resentful or sullen process. His was too refined and gentle a nature to harbor a vengeful or ill-natured thought. It was a longing purely wistful. From his place in the end of one spoke he looked far toward a great hub and knew many spokes led from there. He longingly enjoyed the thought that the people were happy who lived in the hub. It was a longing purely fateful—purely sad. He was not born the runaway type. There lay deep within him an unsuspected, unselfconscious forbearing loyalty to the four people who had been kind to the clan that had harbored him. Unprofitable tho it might be, it was like a birthmark which he couldn't help because it never occurred to him to help it.

CARLOS' act was among the first ones. He went into the make-up tent. It never took him long to get laced into an old monkey-skin, and so the task of his making up was never heavy. Too, he was now adept in all his various stunts. If nothing else, life was considerably easier than it once had been. He was supple. His physical trim was absolute. Backward mid-air somersaults were now but expressions of playfulness; so, he no longer thought of the days when Johnnie presided with a cat-o-nine-tails and the decree was to stand upside-down without toppling, on top of twelve or more shakey boxes, or suffer the consequences. It was hard, then; it seemed like the "camel and the needle's eye." Four or five lashings was nothing for a morning; and many mornings, when he felt particularly terrified, there had been many more. But that was past.

While the sadness of the memory of these early days had vanished, the other sadness had grown up in its place. Carlos would have chosen to learn a great deal about everything in the world; that first, then, some profession or trade chosen by the aid of its light. He knew so little about the outside world that he did not dream there were free universities. Perhaps that was fortunate, for he did not even possess a grammar-school diploma. In the long-ago, little Iris' mother had taught the children to read, write and count. Then malaria had descended upon them and the circus they were then traveling with, reaping fully three-fourths of the company. Johnnie and Elizabeth, and Maggie and George, the people they knew best in the company, had promised the boy's father and the girl's parents that they would watch over the children and be kindly to them. There had been no adoption, but the little ones had become a sort of stock-holdings of this clique. Iris was trained as a bareback rider—a supple, easy-moving little Pierrette in her pompoms and gauzes. Carlos had been schooled in contortionism and the feats that go with it. He was the little monkey of the show, always wearing a monkey costume with a long, useless tail. He made it a practice to whisk in to Iris just before performance and prance about for her—"monkey" for her, she called it. To Carlos this was the cream of the evening. He would run over the table, perch on the back of a chair, scratch his side, cock his head and do many other "cute" tricks which never lost their humor for her. He called her his adopted sister. How softly contented she would look at such times!

The make-up tent was murky. Carlos had his big monkey suit on now. It was the hide of the old gorilla Job, but Carlos had grown and could wear it fittingly. The spectacle of a lightly springing, nimbly whirling gorilla gave an attractive ludicrousness to his act. It was this incongruity which nowadays convulsed the throngs with laughter. So he thought as he hung all his clothes upon a ten-penny nail and gave the mirror a rough straightening.

Carlos walked out into the night. A resolution crystallized in his mind. He had long felt that if he could only "monkey" for Iris she would get better at once. Didn't he know it was "her monkey" that she wanted? Didn't he know how to bring the laughter to her eyes? As Maggie had just gone on with Elizabeth for their trapeze act, it meant a half-hour's grace for Carlos.

He approached Iris' tent. He saw it was more than brightly lighted; there must have been five gasoline lamps burning inside. The front flaps of the tent hung open. Carlos ran to the opening. He stopped short before it, however. Mr. Pringle, the owner of the circus, was seated with a strange man and woman in front of Iris' bed.

What could they be talking about? It concerned Iris, Carlos knew. He drew into the tent, his heart in his mouth. He had heard of deathbed conferences.

"Remember—if you aren't absolutely sure she's never been legally adopted by these four circus people," the stranger-lady said to Mr. Pringle, "why, brother dear, it would mean a great deal of trouble, not for us alone, but for you, dear. You're such a big-hearted old thing—are you sure, now, that there's no haste in your conclusions?"

What could it mean!

Mr. Pringle was speaking now.

"Lila, you and your husband can rely on me absolutely. Neither of these two children has been adopted by that George-Johnnie crowd or any one else. George has told me, if once, a hundred times, always when he has managed to get moonshine; and a man tells a secret only when he's drunk. The kids have never been adopted. And bright! I'm telling you something. They're a pair for the best. I'd put that young girl in the ring with any of them for brains. And, as I say, the new tumbler I'm taking on has a couple of kids in the Ringside Circus that he's willing to have me put on very reasonably so that they might be near their father. So, you see, I'm not losing out on an attraction by letting you have Iris."

"Poor little dear," the woman said feelingly to the semi-waking girl. The woman was well-dressed, tall and very handsome, and perhaps 50 years of age. Her husband, a kindly looking gentleman, patted the little girl's wrist solicitously.

"Don't you understand, Miss Iris, that you are to get well and come East with us to a real home of your own?"

"We'll take her to the Grand Hotel here until she can travel, don't you think, dear," mused his wife after a pause. "She'll be what poor little Isobel was to us. Isn't she pretty!"

She was pretty. The temples still held their childish shape and the little challenging face was both boyish and winsome as it lay in stupor caused partly by fever and partly by strong medicines.

"According to Brother Fred here," said the stranger-man, "she's bright and willing—and cheerful. In these alone she fills the bill quite. I can easily prepare her for the University High School and, helping her thru that, can have her in my own classes in three or four years, if her tastes are still inclined toward that sort of thing."

"Well it's all she thinks of, Mannering. Her mother was somewhat of a scholar I hear, but she died too soon," answered Mr. Pringle.

They watched the child for many minutes in silence. If they had listened intently, they could have distinguished a queer gulping sound behind them. But it escaped them because they were intent on the sick little one.

"Thank you, Fred," said the stranger-lady at length, looking lovingly at Mr. Pringle. Then the lady gave a little start and all three turned their heads.

A youth in a monkey costume stood before them.

Carlos was springing thru his antics some twenty minutes later. The three sides of the great canvas amphitheater were three oceans of heads. Because everything about him was going on as usual, he knew his act was progressing all right; but while his body careened and whirled, his mind was as a great, bottomless, deathly-black pool. If Iris—if Iris were taken away—he knew not what would become of him. If kind God could let his little "sister" go——. He had gone up to them in Iris' tent and prayed them on his knees not to take her away. It was a ridiculous costume in which he made the prayer, tho the prayer was none the less earnest. A great gorilla with an enervated tail is not generally an object to appeal to one's pity; and yet the two strangers could have almost sworn they saw a tear trickle over its furry lid and down its grotesque face. Mr. Pringle saw nothing of this, however. He asked Carlos if he would deprive Iris of the education that Carlos himself had wanted so much for both of them. Carlos had answered, "No, then take her—but please don't take her away—I mean, do take her." And thus kind God was going to let this come to pass.

The scene pressed into his consciousness; that and the black wound of realizing that from now on—everything was useless; futile.

MEANWHILE his physical being, thru habit of years, was somersaulting and capering, springing and vaulting. Once he ceased being abstracted long enough to compute the spring necessary to send him to a particular trapeze. Then, before he relapsed into his tragic reverie, his eye fell upon the great cage where the Vixen and the other great species of monkeys were held prisoners. The Vixen hung sullenly close to the gate of the cage. Did a vagrant desire to throw himself into that trap momentarily sieze Carlos? Mr. and Mrs. Mannering, who with Mr. Pringle happened to have come in to watch from the rear at that moment, averred that Carlos caught himself in the midst of the most fantastic and engaging mid-air somersault under the bar and pulled himself up, peering wildly at the monkey cage. Mr. and Mrs. Mannering, following his gaze across the seas of people, also saw the cage of brutes there. But there was something in front of it. Iris, in her filmy night-gown, apparently in delirium, had a key in the lock of the cage. They had looked just in time to see her twist the key, swing the gate open, fling herself within and topple into the embrace of the monster Vixen lurking there.

It all transpired very quickly. The Vixen clutched her in a twinkling in one powerful arm and vaulted out of the cage and up to a trapeze swing with twenty monsters after it—before a soul could interfere. In fact, an escaping horde of brutes was the first that most of the spectators saw of the happening. Like gigantic bees they flowed along the trapeze works and swarmed under the roof, demoniac fires finting their eyes as they fought and tore, screeched and wrenched for

(Continued on Page 11.)

Further Developments in a Most Unique Detective Story

Tied With Green String

By Horace Holly

What Happened in the Two Previous Installments

This is a remarkable mystery story, in which the author brings to light the crooked operations of various bold swindlers who roll up comfortable fortunes thru the promotion of worthless stocks and securities. Oily, crafty schemers—brokers, so-called—with palatial offices and many gold letters on their doors and windows. Not the least active among them, when the story opened, was

J. HAMILTON EAVES, who played his fake games to the last card, and if it were not for playing-cards perhaps the story never would have been told. It appears that after a certain defunct magazine in its dying number had branded one group as being the "Thirteen Kings of Crooked Chicago Finance," three of the number had met with sudden and mysterious deaths soon after being warned to close up their business within a week.

PERRY L. PADDEN, one rainy night, drove his auto into Chicago River and was drowned. There were suspicious circumstances.

MAURICE L. ROTHBLUME was found dead in Tower Square, near his home. Apoplexy, the surgeon said.

JOHNSTONE LEE expired at the home of his sister, with indications that he had been poisoned—ptomaine poison, according to the family doctor.

Padden's warning had been one lone playing-card—a king—upon which the words were written with a toy typewriter. Rothblume received a deck with one king missing. Lee got a deck with two kings missing. And now Eaves had received a deck with three kings extracted, altho his name had not figured among the magazine's thirteen crooked financiers. All of the warning cards were signed "Star of the Night."

JASON FOLWELL, expert engineer and draughtsman employed by J. Hamilton Eaves, was accused by Eaves of robbing his safe of $5,100 in bonds and securities. The only other office employe intrusted with the combination of the strongbox was

AVERY REARDON, a girl stenographer, who might have accomplished the robbery, according to the broker's suspicions.

Knowing that the girl was about to leave the city on her vacation, Folwell hastened to her home and told her about the theft, explaining that he had assumed full guilt for the same, altho innocent. He mentioned a strange compact he had made with Eaves, but withheld the nature of it, further than to state that thru it he was to retain his liberty. Folwell, who was in love with Avery, had discovered that Eaves had tricked her mother out of $19,500 in American Aeroplane Stabilizer stock, a fact not unknown to Avery before she accepted a position in Eaves' office. The loss wiped out her mother's heritage from her deceased husband. Avery had hoped to get something back from her employer in course of time, and had refused to marry the engineer because of her unwillingness to make her mother a burden upon him. Avery recalled that a

JAUNTY-LOOKING WORKMAN, who claimed to be a telephone repairman, had been left alone in the office during lunch time on the day of the safe robbery.

The service to be performed by Folwell was a dangerous one, namely: He was to disguise himself as Eaves and for fourteen days take his employer's place in the office, at his home and at the club where the broker took his meals—in fact, assume all hazards of the strange compact and service, realizing that he was to masquerade as a man evidently marked for a tragic death.

Eaves planned to remain concealed in his office during the fourteen days. His meals were to be brought in to him. The pair arranged a "fake" explosion with flashlight powder and some gauze was obtained for the bandaging and camouflaging of Folwell's face after Eaves' employes had seen the broker's face bandaged. Folwell was also supplied with an extra suit of Eaves' clothes. Folwell was to be sent out on some special work for a couple of weeks, the clerks were told.

LIONELL PETTIBONE, Eaves' stepson, was the only person let into the secret. He knew of the threats against the broker's life. There were two revolvers in Eaves' desk. Both felt well prepared against a visit from the "Star of the Night." Folwell went to the Eaves mansion, met Pettibone and during the dinner congratulated the stepson on his engagement with the heiress,

ROSLYN VAN ETTEN, announcement of which he had read in a newspaper. After a quiet, uneventful night at Eaves' home, Folwell rebandaged his face and motored to the business district. From the downtown garage he proceeded to the Temple. He found his employer seated in a swivel-chair with an ugly-looking claspknife driven into his back. J. Hamilton Eaves was dead. Evidently, the Star of the Night had struck!

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This story began in No. 23, the Ledger for June 4. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLEW OF THE MINT.

IT SEEMED to Jason Folwell that he stood in that doorway for a full twenty minutes, instead of a bare fifteen seconds, trying to assure himself that what he saw was not the product of a disordered imagination. When long afterward he lived over the scene in retrospect he remembered how unnatural the whole thing seemed, the body slumped in the chair, the electric lights, the drawn shades, the portable desk telephones in the inner and outer offices standing like solemn diminutive monuments, shrouded as they were in their gray silk bags which Eaves had had made to drop over them before the sweepers came each night to raise a haze of dust.

At last he managed to stride forward, automatically closing the door behind him. With one hand on the revolver in his hip pocket, he advanced cautiously across the intervening office space and into the brightly lighted private room. But there was no need for this wariness, for with the exception of himself and the quiet, calm body, sitting there in the swivel-chair, there was no living creature present.

He stood for several seconds gazing down at the body, which held on its face a look of pain—dazzling pain which must have frozen on it as the knife sunk itself treacherously into the soft flesh of his back and, presumably, into his heart. The fingers were clasped in a death grip around the handles of the chair, and the white teeth showed gleamingly as tho death had intercepted a deep groan emanating from Eaves' lips. A glance over the desk showed Folwell a few papers scattered around, an open fountain pen lying there. There was so sign of the canvas camp cot having even been unfolded. The empty milk bottle, washed at the faucet, stood in the corner of the room. When the blow had been struck Eaves had been working at his desk, unconscious that the fate he was trying to dodge was at his heels. Folwell's half-consumed bag of peppermints, whose location he had described as he parted with Eaves the night before, now stood near the latter's bronze inkwell, with but a few left in it, and standing almost in front of the body was the dictatograph on its rolling rubber wheels upon which it had been drawn over from the wall.

To stand aimlessly here, however, in the shadow of murder was the height of folly, and Folwell at once stepped into the outer office to notify the police. For the space of several seconds he fumbled at the gray silk bag, which was dropped over the phone—the "night-caps," as old Fisher facetiously termed them—and stripping it off, raised the receiver, and called Chicago's police exchange—Main 13. But he sniffed as he did so. The unmistakable odor of peppermint, trapped in the rubber cone-shaped transmitter, came forth to his nostrils. So J. Hamilton Eaves, after all his careful preparations to outwit his fate, had answered the phone and had betrayed himself with his own voice. Yet how had the mysterious Star of the Night—specialist in murder who was not only one hundred per cent efficient in his results, but quite businesslike in his methods—known which phone to ring on? Or had he tried them both?

At Folwell's request he was put into communication with central detective headquarters almost in the twinkling of an eye, and a voice with a burr on it—a Scotch burr—responded.

"Yes," it said grouchily, "what is it you want? Inspector McIlroy speaking."

"This is Jason T. Folwell, an employe of the National Industrial Securities Company in the Temple. Mr. J. Hamilton Eaves, the president, has been murdered in the night and his body is sitting in the office here in his swivel-chair. Better send over men at once."

The voice on the other end of the

wire became suddenly alive.

"Murdered, eh? Eaves. The Temple." He turned to another man at his elbow and talked rapidly for the fraction of a minute. "All right. Disturb nothing till we get there." And he hung up.

After the connection was disestablished Folwell strolled back again to the dead man, who still sat, grinning as if in severe pain. Slowly unwrapping from his face the gauze which had proved to be such a useless means of camouflage, he pondered over the sight in front of him. With his face once more clear again, and the roll deposited on the top of Eaves' desk, he reached out a hand very gingerly and touched the handle of the ugly-looking black weapon plunged into the dead man's back, and saw by the slight lateral motion that it was a gigantic clasp knife whose blade folded away into the handle when not in use. From this his mind strayed again to the fact of the peppermint odor, trapped in the transmitter of the outer phone. Somehow, it troubled him, puzzled him. Had Eaves really been called? Or had he perhaps been the caller? But if he had done the calling, why had he gone clear to the outer room? Almost mechanically he leaned forward, past the dictatograph, whose position he did not alter in the least, and gently withdrew from the phone on Eaves' desk the remaining silk "nightcap." He smelled carefully at the transmitter. No odor of peppermint was present there. Eaves had used the outer phone only. Hence the party who had called him had known, at least, that the National Industrial Securities Company, whose number was Central 9661, and J. Hamilton Eaves, whose number was Central 9660, were one and the same office and were, in fact, one and the same individual.

As he carefully replaced upon the phone the slender silk bag, Folwell heard in the outer hallway the sound of shuffling feet, followed by a none too gentle pounding upon the door. Going to the door, he opened it. On the threshold stood a ruddy-faced man of about 50, whose iron-gray hair dropped low down on his temples. He wore a faded police sergeant's cap and a faded blue coat with regulation buttons on it. At one side of him was a tall, slender man with narrow black eyebrows and wide-open black eyes; at his other a little, stocky, bullet-headed individual whose eyes, crinkled into tiny, diverging creases at the outer corners, were like gimlet points boring thru the open doorway. And each carried the unmistakable earmarks of the plain-clothes man.

"There he is, all right," said the man in the blue coat, evidently the official. "Come in, boys." He turned and surveyed Folwell searchingly as he thrust his way in. 'Your name is——"

"Folwell. Jason T. Folwell," said Folwell, quite oblivious for the second to the fact that he was dressed in the outer apparel, well known as it was, of J. Hamilton Eaves, who now sat dead not twenty-five feet away.

The three men, without any further ado, pushed their way into the tiny private office, Folwell following, where he stood by the wall, silent, grave, waiting to answer any questions. The man in the blue coat, with his index finger, felt at once the handle of the knife, trying it in several directions.

'A beautiful blow," he commented dryly, the Scotch burr rising to his tongue. "A blow that would have struck down an ox if delivered with the fist." He glanced around the room, at the tightly drawn down shades, the lights burning, and stared curiously at the tiny silk cap over the desk phone. Then he turned to Folwell.

"Now for you," he said gruffly. "Give us all the information you've got on this thing."

FOLWELL cleared his throat. "I can tell you in a hundred words. Folwell, Jason T. Folwell is my name. This man is J. Hamilton Eaves, president and virtually owner of the company whose name is on the door. I was employed by Mr. Eaves as his mechanical expert in his promotional work on industrial devices. His life was threatened by a letter a week ago, ordering him to close up his business within a week, or follow a certain three men in his special field who he believed emphatically were murdered."

"What three men?" queried the man in the blue coat abruptly.

"Perry L. Paddon, Maurice L. Rothblume and Johnstone Lee, all in business on La Salle street here," replied Folwell.

"Paddon wasn't murdered, Chief McIlroy," put in the short, stocky man, contemptuously. "Don't you remember how he went over the Madison street draw into the river—full tilt—one night last August?"

"I remember it well, Kelsey," said McIlroy. "I don't recall anything about a Rothblume or a Lee, however." He turned to the tall, thin man. "Do you, Roberts?"

The man addressed shook his head. "No, chief."

"Mr. Lee was supposed to have died of ptomaine poisoning," put in Folwell, "and Rothblume was picked up, supposedly a victim of apoplexy. Each had received threatening letters, however, as did Eaves, here. That's all I can tell you about that in brief."

"Well, go on with the story," commanded McIlroy.

"Mr. Eaves hired me yesterday afternoon to take his place on the streets for fourteen days, dressed exactly as I am in his outer clothing—thus resembling him—and with my face done up in that roll of gauze which lies there. I was armed with a weapon he gave me, in case an attack was made upon me. His intentions were to eat and sleep in the office here, and thus circumvent whoever was out to get him."

"What'd he pay you for the job?" snapped McElroy.

"Well, there were certain private arrangements entered into," said Folwell guardedly, "in the nature of promises relating to various matters about patents and so forth." He dismissed the question. "I fulfilled my part of the contract last night. I left him at about 7 o'clock. I went straight to his home, where I spent the entire evening in his stepson's company, slept there, came down this morning—and here's what I found. Then I called you." He pointed to the ghastly dead body.

McIlroy looked him over between cold gray eyes, under shaggy gray eyebrows.

"So he received a threat, eh? Wonder where it is?"

"He told me he had sealed it up and put it away in the vault there," replied Folwell.

"Do you know the combination?" asked the man in the faded blue coat.

"I did," said Folwell. Without any further ado he stepped over to the vault door and pulling back the cuffs of Eaves' substitute coat he was still wearing turned the shiny dial around to the combination. It failed to give the answering click, and he knew at once the cause. Eaves had altered both the inner and outer combinations after his unfortunate loss which to Folwell was still a perplexing riddle. He turned to McIlroy. "Mr. Eaves has altered the combination," he said simply.

The two younger men were taking notes in their leather-covered notebooks, and talking together in low tones, pointing around at various articles. Like good headquarters men, however, they were careful not to disturb the location or position of anything. The silence was broken by McIlroy, pointing at the bright, silver-plated machine with its many-colored keys that stood close to Eaves' elbow on its rubber-tired wheels.

"And what do you call that?"

"That," Folwell informed him, "is the Shanks dictatograph, one of Mr. Eaves' stock promotions. It is a machine which is supposed, by the aid of any one who has learned to operate the keyboard, to allow the taking down of conversation—of dictation—and the transmitting of it on paper in groups of English consonants which any typist can learn to transcribe. The small keyboard at the top allows names and figures to be spelled out completely by the operator."

"And is that sheet of paper coming out of th' rollers the record that it makes?"

Folwell gazed at the platen of the instrument. Somehow, so used had he been to the dictatograph that the sight of a sheet of white paper peeping from the rubber rolls had seemed like the customary thing.

He nodded. "Yes."

McIlroy stepped forward and jerked it out. With a clicking motion it ran from the platen, and he held it up, staring at the groups of consonants typed in clear black ink. He pointed at the red clocklike circle with its one hand, that graced the top of the sheet.

"What's this?" he asked.

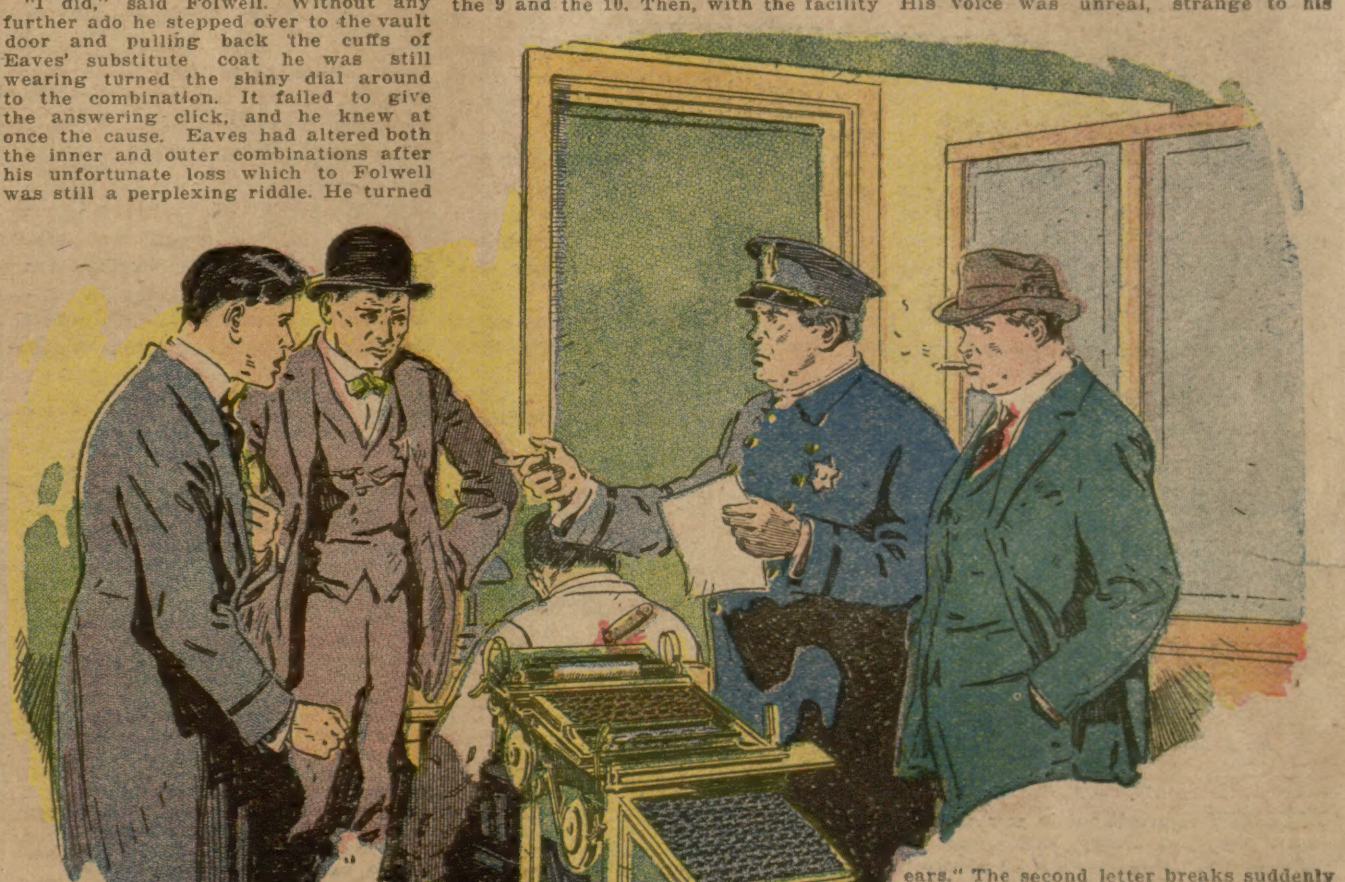
"That is a time stamp incorporated in the machine, automatic, which records the time each letter is dictated."

"Can a man take down his own dictation?" asked McIlroy.

"Far easier than he can take down any one else's," said Folwell truthfully. "It's not at all difficult with a little practice to take down your own words, for the reason that your mind sees them in advance. But it's a difficult feat to take down some one else's."

"Why would he have been using the machine himself?" asked McIlroy.

"If it contains a business letter," replied Folwell, "it is probably one that occurred to him while he was working by himself last evening, and he clicked it hurriedly off, intending probably to have me typewrite it for him today, or perhaps the old bookkeeper, who can transcribe dictatograph notes. Very likely he intended to type it himself today when he had leisure. His stenographer, you see, has left for a two weeks' vacation."



"Put the Bracelets on Him, Camera Eye, and Take Him Over to Headquarters and Lock Him Up."

M'ILROY thrust the paper roughly at him. "Then give us a reading on this, Mr. Mechanical Expert. We have something here that looks good, I'm thinking." He turned to the short, stocky man. "Kelsey, if this man typed out one of his business letters at 9:45, as the little red time stamp shows, then do we know for sure that he wasn't murdered till after that hour, eh, old Camera Eye?"

Folwell stared at the time stamp. As McIlroy had stated, the red arrow pointed at the fourth of the six dots between the 9 and the 10. Then, with the facility gained by long experience in translating and interpreting dictatograph material, he began reading very slowly:

> Dear Sir:
>
> In reply to your letter will say if you intend to loan on the Shanks stock he owns said stock according to our books, and I hold first lien on it for $2,000 which I agreed last week to renew for one year from date of expiration. The stock is well worth a further loan, and I would be glad to advance more, but am very tight myself. Only today my mechanical expert in this company——

Folwell stopped dead. His face burned bright red. His ears tingled. His throat seemed to close up on him. A roaring was in his eardrums.

"I—I—I can't very well go on," he stammered desperately. "I——"

"Give us every word of it," demanded McIlroy suspiciously, staring at Folwell's finger poised half-way along the groups of consonants. "Go on, my man."

Folwell sighed a desperate, sickening sigh. He couldn't stop midway and plead ignorance of the meaning when he had proceeded this far smoothly. Should he do so, it would be a very easy thing for a man on the Central Detective Bureau, armed with one of the instruction booklets that accompanied the dictatograph, to read the remainder of the notes. And even if this were not so, old Fisher, Beebe, Meier, even young Hal almost, could read them. One long, angry, embarrassing moment he paused, the cynosure of all eyes in the room. Then with an ugly click he shut his teeth together and went on, recklessly, despairingly:

> ——signed a written confession to the effect that he——

Folwell stopped to swallow the lump in his throat. McIlroy glared. "Go on," he snapped.

> ——stole $5,100 in bonds and stocks from my safe.
>
> Very truly yours,
>
> To John J. Jeng,
> Hotel Courtland,
> New York City.
> Hold till called for.

Folwell looked up. He caught a reflection of his face in the glass across the room. It was white as paper. McIlroy's gaze was pinned on the forefinger, which had stopped but four-fifths of the distance down the page of notes.

"The rest of it," he ordered gruffly. "Every word."

Folwell sighed. He was thankful there were but two more lines of an evidently new letter which had just begun. He read, trying to drown out the sounds of thundering waterfalls in his brain:

> Dear Shanks:
>
> Account of Jeng's letter and the old error on the stock books, please send on immediately the serial number of your second stock certificate. I think——

Folwell looked up. "That is all." His voice was unreal, strange to his ears." The second letter breaks suddenly off there."

McIlroy was gazing scornfully at him. "You d—d thief," he ejaculated contemptuously. He stepped forward and jerked from Folwell's fingers the paper. "What do you know about that, boys?"

Folwell found his tongue at last. His words came forth in a torrent of stammering indignation. "He—he had no right to write that first letter." His tone of voice was desperate. "That—that—that refers to personal matters between us. He had no right to leave such words. He——"

"No right, eh?" said the Scotchman. "And since when doesn't a man have a right to answer a business letter? Kelsey, get the stuff out of the dead man's pockets; then go thru th' desk and collect up all the papers. You, Roberts, call headquarters and get O'Brien, Egan, Pederson and Lanson over here; also the camera man." He stood surveying Folwell from under his iron-gray brows, while Kelsey ran his fingers into each of the pockets of the dead man, who sat quite oblivious to the insult.

"Thank God!" said Folwell fervently to himself, "that he locked that cursed confession back in the vault yesterday. They'll be able to get no further information. Heavens, what a complication. Why—why did he do it?"

But his triumph was short-lived, for from J. Hamilton Eaves' breast pocket Kelsey's stubby fingers emerged holding a paper, at the sight of whose purple writing Folwell's spirits dropped clear to his toes. It was the confession he had signed that morning before. It was the same, unmistakable.

Kelsey was unfolding it. He glanced at it. His eyes opened wider. Then with a short, hard laugh he handed it to his superior, who, with the dictatograph letter still in one hand, ran his eyes over the written words and the signature on the bottom. At the con-

(Continued on Page 14.)

Concluding a Detective Story as Interesting as Its Title

United Looters, Inc.

By Ralph Cummins

The First Half of the Serial

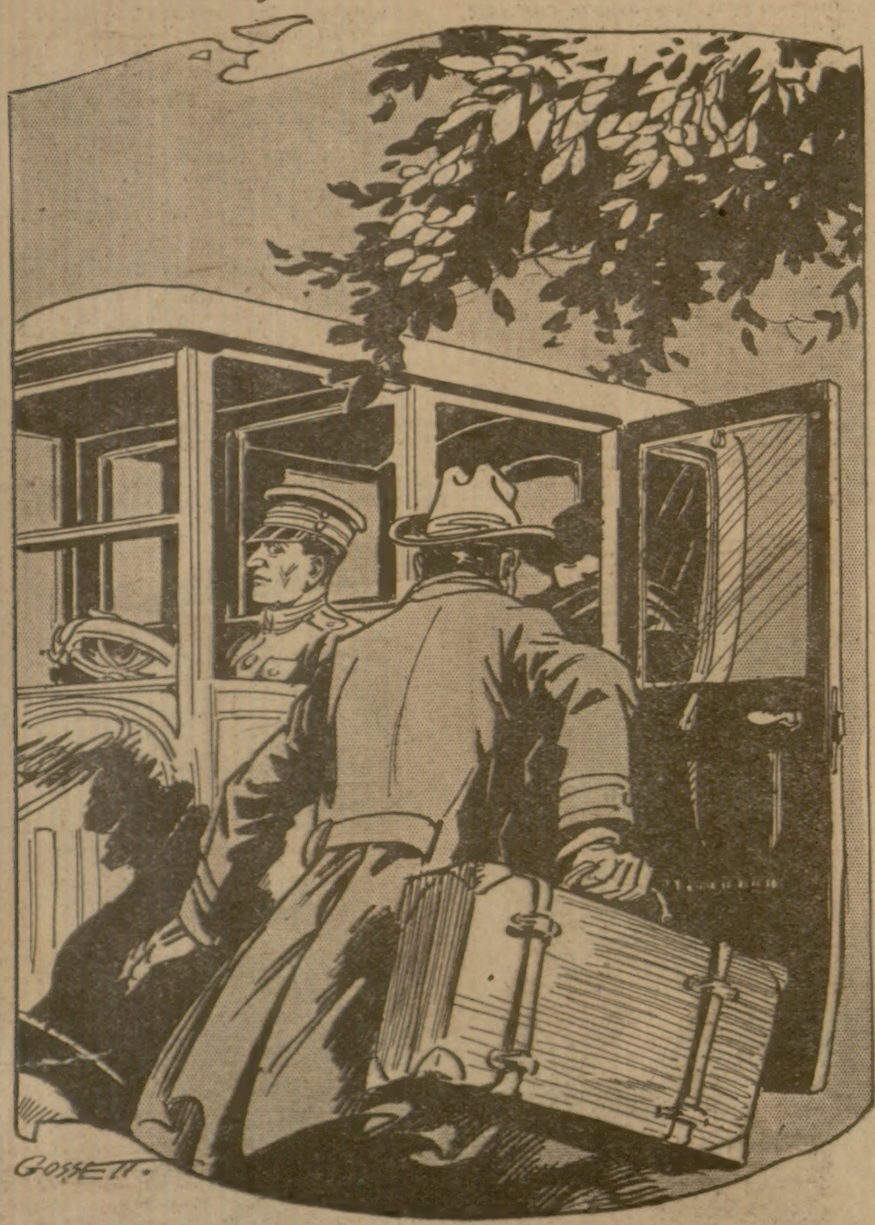
This is a story of a young business man who in his boyhood years hoped to be a real detective. As an amateur he had several times demonstrated unusual ability in the line of detective work. It was not surprising, therefore, when numerous banks had been robbed by employes of the institutions, and the embezzlers had escaped with large sums of ready money, that he was called into service by the International Fidelity Company, a bonding concern, to impersonate one

SAM DERBY, a convicted bank teller, supposed—by all not in the secret—to be out of prison on parole. His impersonator's task was to rejoin a branch of the United Syndicate (clever bank looters) and enter into a scheme to rob another big bank—from the inside—and at the proper time bring about the capture of the chief crooks. Convinced that he was the real Sam Derby, the Syndicate turned over to him twenty-three thousand dollars that had been held for the former bank teller while he was in prison.

DOUGLAS EVANS, president of the Metropolitan Bank of Los Angeles, was pleased to learn that Mr. Barry North, the bank's new employe, knew considerable about bank vaults and safes. As his bank needed a new outfit, he took the young man out to his home and introduced him to his young woman secretary,

MISS ALSTAN BOURKE, whom the young man recognized as a girl he had seen convicted of a crime in the Chicago Federal Court. However, things were going along smoothly for the bogus Sam Derby, alias Mr. Barry North of Chicago, when he received a wire from the bonding company to the effect that "D" had escaped from prison. This, of course, referred to the real Sam Derby, who would surely seek his old pals and demand the twenty-three thousand dollars they had been keeping for him.

And the false Sam Derby, and the equally fictitious Barry North of Chicago, worried about it. Now go ahead with the concluding part of the story.



As I Tossed the Suitcase In I Peered at the Muffled Figure Inside.

V.

I COULDN'T figure it out in any other way. If Sam Derby had escaped and already was seeking to locate his former pals of the Syndicate, surely there was trouble ahead for me. But a tight place was what I always had enjoyed. My boyish spirit of bravado returned. I chuckled as I touched a match to the note.

"That must have been good news, Mr. North."

I had not heard Miss Bourke approach, yet I did not whirl in surprise. I laughed as easily as I could and faced her quiet smile.

"No news at all," I returned carelessly. "Just another safe expert wanting an interview."

Why did she doubt my explanation? Oh, I had learned even then to read a lot in that clear steady glance. She did not speak—just threw at me that one quick glance, but in her manner as she turned down across the lawn, I read anew my conviction that she was that other local member of the United Syndicate.

I spent much thought during that evening and the sleepless night that followed in trying to formulate some plan for preventing the complete collapse of my plans. If I only had some evidence that would identify the man who was responsible for the orders that I had just received. But I had only a suspicion and that was directed against the one person whom I must save when the blow fell. For I knew even then that the call of duty could not force me to anything that would mean punishment to Alstan Bourke. Undoubtedly she was the other agent of the Syndicate. Still I found it hard to believe that back of that level gaze there was a cunning criminal mind.

There was a hope from one source. Of course it had been Wallace, manager of the International, who had sent me the warning of Derby's escape. I had wired him a full report the night before, and he was the only person except members of the Syndicate who knew where I was. I was sure that Wallace would do all in his power to prevent Derby from disarranging my plans, but aside from recapturing the escaped prisoner how could he help me? Why, by preventing news of the escape from reaching the Syndicate to their agent at the Metropolitan.

Was there any way in which I could help?

Several times I had thought of attempting to extract information of Syndicate affairs from Alstan Bourke, but one glance at her firm chin, and steady eyes told me how impossible of success such a course would be. Now, with failure confronting me, would it not be well to have Miss Bourke removed? But to do that I must denounce her as a criminal, and even the success of my enterprise would not allow me to do that.

NEXT morning I felt miserable, but I was moved to see that Miss Bourke also was worried. There were dark clouds under her eyes and her cheeks did not glow with their usual color. And several times I was sure that I saw a puzzled question in her eyes as she looked at me.

It was early in the forenoon when the telephone bell rang. I heard Miss Bourke's crisp voice, an instant of silence and her quick reply to a question.

"Mr. Evans is out just now. Is there a message?"

Another silence, then——

"A telegram? I will take it."

I sensed her movements as she reached for a pencil and rustled a slip of paper within reach.

"What's that? . . . A code? I thought——"

I was interested. Evans had received a number of code messages, but so far I had been unable to see one of them, or to overhear anything that would give me an inkling of their purport. And the reason that I was so interested was the fact that in every case the messages had been received by Miss Bourke. That fact might mean something.

She did not repeat the message. After a moment I heard the receiver click upon the hook and I glanced across at the girl. I wandered if she were able to read that code.

I looked directly into her steady gaze. She was crumpling the slip of paper in her fingers, but I could see that she had forgotten the message. There was a strange, new light in her eyes as they met mine. Was it pity? Well, if it was pity—I smiled and I know that I let my heart speak thru my smile.

My careless attitude brought a change in her. She bit her lip and a worried frown creased her brow. Her glance shot thru the window to where Evans was leisurely approaching.

Then, with her quick, graceful stride she crossed to my chair and stood beside me.

"Who are you?" she demanded, and there was a softness in her voice that was like a caress.

I rose to face her and my smile grew. Well might I smile, or even sing, for I was reading unbelievable things in her expressive eyes.

"Just a poor heart-weary slave," I bantered. "Just a searcher of life's mysteries—who is now solving the biggest problem of them all."

Her eyes narrowed and her lips tightened. Slowly she raised the crumpled piece of paper and while her level gaze held me she tore it into little pieces and tossed it into the wastebasket. With the hint of a smile upon her lips she turned back to her desk just as Evans limped into the room.

But my eyes saw nothing of the vault plans before me. Something that I had read in Alstan Bourke's eyes had changed my whole outlook on life. Was it a flashing spark of tenderness that had illumined her face and had set fire to my lonely heart?

As nearly as I could figure it that message had concerned me. Had it been a warning to Evans that I was an agent of the United Syndicate? Or was the message intended for Miss Bourke, its contents exposing my claims to being Sam Derby?

Whatever the message, it had been something that meant a danger to me. And Miss Bourke had suppressed it!

She was her usual self that night, but I could make no opportunity to speak to her alone. At dinner I suggested a picture show, but she refused with a glance in which I imagined that I read a warning.

I lingered upon the porch for a half-hour, hoping that Miss Bourke would come out. But she seemed very busy in the office. Several times I heard the telephone bell ring, and heard her quiet voice talking. Once she called Evans in.

At last I lit a cigarette and started down the street. At the corner I paused and looked back. Under the street light above I saw the indistinct form of a man. Something about his attitude struck me. I scrutinized my surroundings carefully. Across the street from the Evans place a man was sitting on a pile of lumber trying to read a paper by the feeble light from the street globe. Upon the corner near me a man in greasy overalls was tinkering with a motorcycle.

The Evans house was being watched. Why? Was it Miss Bourke or myself who was under surveillance? I determined to find out, and struck out at a brisk walk down the street.

But altho I wandered openly for a dozen blocks I saw no sign of being followed. When I returned by way of the winding road that passed the rear I saw two more men who obviously were killing time.

When I turned the corner I saw that the man with the motorcycle had moved down to the Evans gate. As I approached a messenger on a wheel came tearing up the street and stopped beside the man at the gate, who rose at once and engaged the boy in conversation. But as the man left his machine I saw him slap his bulb horn carelessly with his hand. At the squawk of the horn I glanced toward the house. Alstan Bourke was walking out upon the porch.

After some boyish scuffling the man held the messenger's wheel, then leaned it against a telephone pole. The boy ran up the walk.

I was sure I read that incident aright. It was the man's job to see that all incoming messages fell into the hands of Miss Bourke. That accounted for her close application to the office, with its proximity to the telephone.

All at once a new idea struck me. If Wallace had sent me a warning of the escape of Sam Derby, wouldn't it be reasonable to suppose that he had followed up the warning by getting other help to me, fearing that my personal usefulness would soon be destroyed? I wished that I was able to communicate with Wallace.

I returned to the house. Alstan Bourke was busy in the office. Dr. Baker, Mr. Evans' physician, was at the telephone.

"Mr. Evans is worse," Miss Bourke told me. "Oh, yes, here's a note that just came for you."

I TOOK the note, my eyes upon her face. She looked at me with a steady gaze that I could not read. Suddenly I knew that I loved her—that nothing else mattered if I could save this wonderful fighting girl from being crushed in the wreck of the Looters' Syndicate. I glanced at the note in my hand. If my guess were right it held my final orders for the robbery of the Metropolitan. Did Alstan know what it contained?

I wished the physician would go, so that I might tell her that I loved her. If I could only tell her who I was, and gain her aid, and thus be sure that she would not be punished. But as I looked into those clear eyes something told me that no matter how much in the wrong this girl might be she never would give up.

I sat upon my desk and opened the note. It was what I had suspected. In a few words I was directed to consummate my plans at 10 that night. I was to carry my bag of currency to a certain point on Hill street. A taxicab would drive up. I would toss the bag inside and walk away. Thereafter I would follow the directions for my escape as outlined in the previous orders.

The doctor went out, but he met Mrs. Gray in the hall and stopped to give her directions about Mr. Evans' diet. Miss Bourke drooped wearily over her desk. I was sure she started when the telephone bell rang.

And the question that came to her must have startled her still more. I saw her stiffen and her eyes swung round to me.

"Yes, Mr. Evans is here, but he is quite ill. I am his secretary. Is there a message I could take to him? . . . No, he could not speak to any one tonight. Possibly in the morning. . . . Wh-oo? . . . Yes—but—who, is this, please?"

Something told me again she was fighting my battles. I believe that I laughed with my old-time boyish chuckle. What was any danger that could come to me if she were interested? I started across to her.

"But Mr. North has retired—unless you will give your name——"

I reached her side. She clapped her efficient hand over the transmitter and turned her troubled eyes to mine.

"He won't give his name! His voice sounds—desperate! I'm afraid——"

I placed my hand over her's and looked deep into her eyes.

"But I'm not afraid—of anything—if you'll look at me like that." Then I became very serious, for my life's hopes were in my heart. "There's only one reason why you are protecting me—and—I love you—I'm going to save you in spite of yourself!"

She tossed her head and a queer little

(Continued on Page 18.)

Was It Murder? Was It Abduction? What Was the Solution of

The Strange Case of Cavendish

By Randall Parrish

What Has Happened in Previous Installments

FREDERICK CAVENDISH of New York got a wire from Jim Westcott, Colorado mine prospector, asking him to come West to assist in recovering a "lost lead," one that promised "big," but which had suddenly "petered out." Before starting for the West, Cavendish made a will, drawn by

PATRICK ENRIGHT, a lawyer, by which the bulk of his fortune would go to charitable organizations in case of his death, leaving but a small annuity to John Cavendish, his spendthrift cousin, a Broadway character. Late that night the safe and drawers in Frederick Cavendish's apartments were found rifled, the curtains of the library ablaze and a lifeless body lying by a window opening on the fire-escape. The victim's body was burned almost beyond recognition, and there was evidence of a heavy blow upon the back of his head.

After identification of the body by the dead man's valet, Francois Valois, and by John Cavendish, the cousin, the case was recorded as murder and robbery by party or parties unknown and the body consigned to its grave as that of Frederick Cavendish. On the day following the funeral

JOHN CAVENDISH discharged Valois, the valet, and prepared to assume his cousin's responsibilities and his large fortune. About a month later Enright, the lawyer, summoned Cavendish to his office and told him of the will. As a price for his silence, and his services in clearing up the estate, the lawyer demanded a promisory note for a hundred thousand dollars, which the young heir finally signed, knowing the lawyer could make him trouble.

MISS STELLA DONOVAN, a courageous newspaper woman, and reporter of rare detective ability, employed by the Star, was not satisfied with the disposition of the case, and resolved to keep on the trail of young Cavendish and Celeste La Rue, a show girl who seemed to have first call on the spendthrift in his daily plunges into Broadway's fast life. Miss Donovan followed the show girl to a Colorado mining town, where she met

JIM WESCOTT, Frederick Cavendish's partner in a mining venture, whose enemies were Bill Lacy, a rival mine owner; Ned Beaton, subleader of Lacy's gang, and several disreputable villagers, who profited by their allegiance to Lacy.

The time came when the newspaper woman and Jim Westcott were engaged in a desperate attempt to outwit the gang conspiring against them, whose chief actors were Lacy, Lawyer Enright, Beaton, a New York gunman, and the La Rue woman. Lacy twitted Westcott of not having any money with which to operate his mine, and hinted that he would never get any from his "millionaire friend."

While Westcott was giving orders to Jose Salvari, his watchman and digger at the mine, a shot from the dark missed Westcott and killed the Mexican. The assailant escaped.

After the Mexican was shot Westcott went over to the La Rosa mine and discovered Lacy, Beaton and Enright in consultation. While peering into a window of Lacy's office he was surprised by

MATT MOORE, one of Lacy's men, who attacked him with a knife. Moore was flung to earth and Jim escaped in the darkness, jubilant over what he had overheard, altho slightly cut on the forearm.

Stella met the chorus girl, who stole an important telegram during Stella's absence from her room. Late that night Stella was lured from the hotel by a fictitious note, signed "J. W.," and was made captive and carried off in a covered wagon by Moore and another of Lacy's men, named Joe Sikes. Their destination was an isolated ranch in a small, fertile valley in the Shoshone desert.

This story began in No. 21, the Ledger for May 21. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE SHOSHONE DESERT.

HER guard spoke no word as the wagon rolled slowly onward, but she judged that he leaned back against the bow supporting the canvas in an effort to make himself as comfortable as possible. She could see nothing of the fellow in the darkness, but had formed an impression that he was of medium size, his face covered with a scraggly beard. The driver sat hunched up in formless perspective against the line of sky, but she knew from his voice that he was the man who had first accosted her. In small measure this knowledge afforded some degree of courage, for he had then appeared less brutal, more approachable than the others. Perhaps she might lead him to talk, once they were alone together, and thus learn the purpose of this outrage.

Yet deep down in her mind she felt little doubt of the object in view, or who were involved. Excited as she was, and frightened, the girl was still composed enough to grasp the nature of her surroundings, and she had time now, as the wagon rumbled forward, to think over all that had been said, and fit it into the circumstances.

Moreover she had recognized another voice—altho the speaker had kept out of sight, and spoken only in disguised, rumbling tones—that of Ned Beaton. The fact of his presence alone served to make the affair reasonably clear. The telegram stolen from her room by Miss La Rue had led to this action. They had suspected her before, but that served to confirm their suspicions, and as soon as it had been shown to Enright, he had determined to place her where she would be helpless to interfere with their plans.

But what did they propose doing with her? The question caused her blood to run cold. That these people were desperate she had every reason to believe; they were battling for big stakes; not even murder had hitherto stood in their way? Why, then, should they hesitate to take her life, if they actually deemed it necessary to the final success of their plans? She remembered what Beaton had said about her room—the condition in which it had been eft. It was not all clear, yet it was clear enough, that they had taken every precaution to make her sudden disappearance appear natural. They had removed all her things, and left a note behind in womanly handwriting to explain her hurried departure. There was a master criminal mind, watchful of every detail, behind this conspiracy. He was guarding against every possibility of rescue.

The driver began to use his whip and urge the team forward, the wagon pounding along over the rough road at a rate which compelled the girl to hang on closely to keep her seat. The man beside her bounced about, and swore, but made no effort to touch her, or open conversation. The uncertainty, the fear engendered by her thought, the drear silence almost caused her to scream. She conquered this, yet could remain speechless no longer.

"Where are you taking me?" she asked suddenly.

There was no reply, and she stared toward her silent companion, unable to even perceive his outlines. His silence sent a thrill of anger thru her, and she lost control. Her hand gripped the coarse shirt sleeve in determination to compel him to speak.

"Answer me or I'll scream!"

He chuckled grimly, not in the least alarmed.

"Little good that'll do yer now, young woman," he said gruffly, and the driver turned his head at the sound, "unless yer voice will carry five miles or so; where are we now, Matt?"

"Comin' down ter the Big Slough," answered the other, expectorating over the wheel, and flickering a horse with his whiplash. "'Twouldn't do no harm now ter fasten back the canvas, Joe; maybe she'd feel a bit more ter home that away."

There was a good-natured drawl to the voice which had a tendency to hearten the girl. The driver seemed human, sympathetic; perhaps he would respond to questioning. The other merely grunted, and began to unloosen the cover. She leaned forward, and addressed the rounded back of the fellow in front.

"Are you Mr. Moore?"

He wheeled partly about, surprised into acknowledgment.

"Well, I ain't heered the mister part fer some time, but my name's Matt Moore, tho; how the hell did you know it?"

"The other man called you by name—don't you remember? Besides, I had heard about you before."

"Well, I'll be damned. Do yer hear that, Joe. Who told yer 'bout me?"

"Mr. Westcott; he mentioned you as being one of the men who attacked him in the hotel office yesterday. He said you were one of Lacy's men. So when I heard your name mentioned tonight I knew in whose hands I had fallen. Was the brute who ordered you about Bill Lacy?"

"I reckon it was, miss," doubtfully. "It don't make no difference, does it, Joe?"

"Not as I kin see," growled the other. "Leastwise, her knowin' thet much. 'Tain't likely to do her no good, whichever way the cat jumps. I reckon I'll have a smoke, Matt; I'm dry as a fish."

"Same here; 'bout an hour till daylight, I reckon, Joe; pass the terbacco after yer light up."

The glow of the match gave her swift view of the man's face; it was strange and by no means reassuring, showing hard, repulsive, the complexion as dark as an Indians, the eyes bold and a bit bloodshot from drink. Meeting her glance, he grinned unpleasantly.

"I don't pose fer no lady's man, like Matt," he said sneeringly, the match flaring between his fingers. "That's what Bill sent me 'long fer, 'cause he know'd I'd 'tend ter business, an' not talk too much."

"Your name is Joe?"

"Out yere—yes; Joe Sikes, if it pleases yer eny ter know. Yer might call me Mr. Sikes, if yer want ter be real polite."

He passed the tobacco-bag up to Moore, who thrust the reins under him while deliberately filling his pipe, the team trotting quietly along what seemed to be a hard road. The wagon lurched occasionally, as the wheels struck a stone, but the night was still so dark, the girl could perceive little of their surroundings in spite of the looped-up curtains. There seemed to be a high ridge of earth to their right, crowned by a fringe of low trees, but everything appeared indistinct and desolate. Outside the rumble of their own progress the silence was profound.

"And you will not tell me where we are going?" she insisted, "or what you propose doing with me?"

The pipe-glow revealed Sike's evil countenance; Moore resumed his reins, and there was the sharp swish of a whiplash.

"'Twouldn't mean nuthin' ter yer if I did," said the former finally, after apparently turning the matter over slowly in his mind. "Yer don't know nuthin' 'bout this country. 'Tain't no place a tenderfoot like you kin find yer way back frum; so, as fer as I see, thar ain't nuthin' fer yer to do but just naturally wait till we takes yer back."

"I am to be held a prisoner—indefinitely?"

"I reckon so; not that I knows enything 'bout the program, miss; but that's 'bout the understandin' that Matt an' I has—ain't it, Matt?"

The driver turned his head, and nodded.

"Sure! we're just ter take keer of yer till he comes."

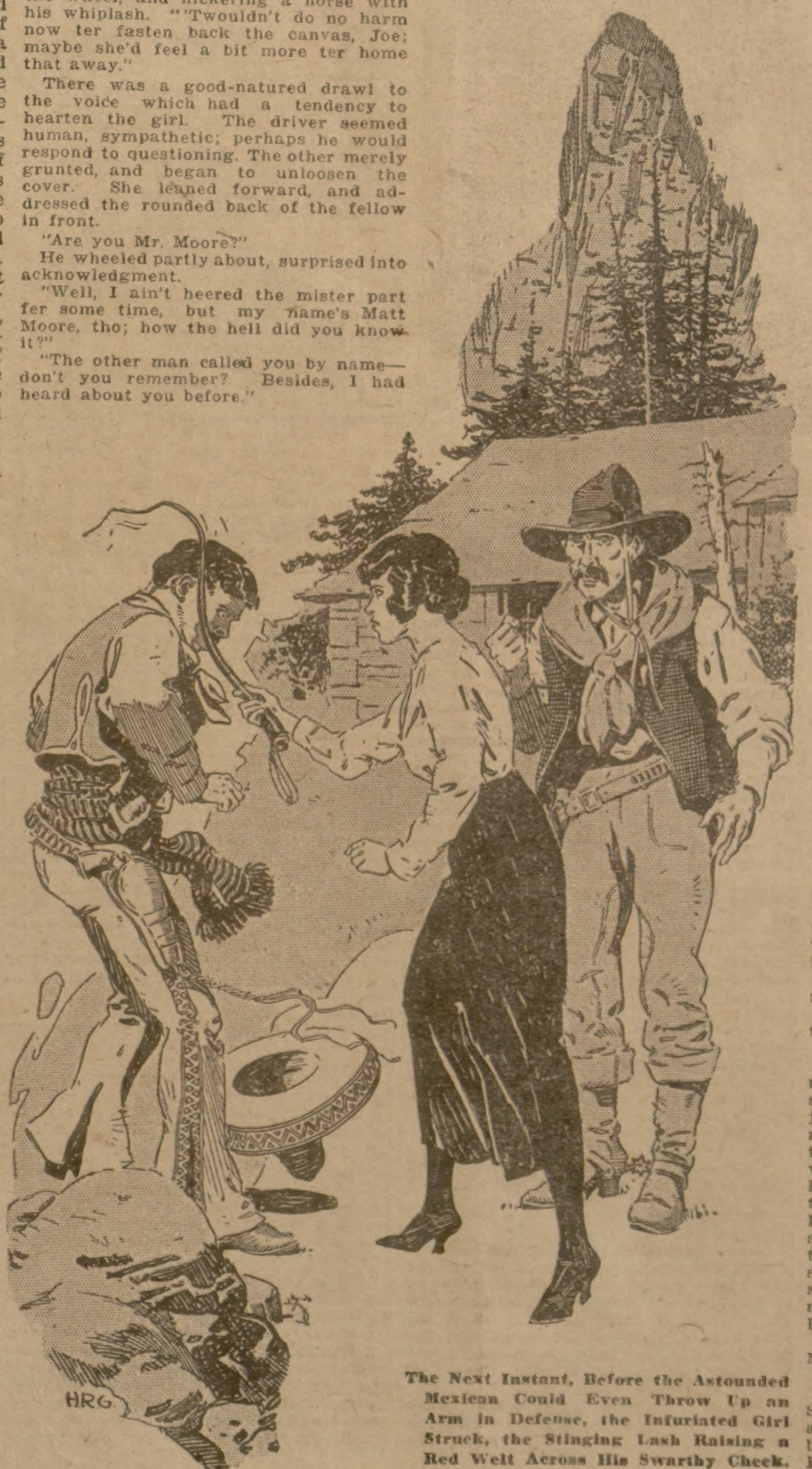
"Lacy?"

"Er—some word from him, miss. It might not be safe for him to come himself. Yer see," apologetically, "I don't just know what the game is, and Bill might want to skip out before you was turned loose. I knowed wunst when he was gone eight months, an' nobody knowed where he was—do yer mind thet time, Joe, after he shot up Medicine Lodge? Well, I reckon thar must be some big money in this job, an' he won't take no chance of gettin' pinched. That seems to be the trouble, miss—you've sorter stuck yerself in whar it wasn't none o' yer business. Thet's what got Lacy down on yer."

"Yes; but what is it to you, and—and Mr. Sikes, here?"

Matt grinned.

"Nuthin' much ter me, or ter—ter Mr. Sikes—how's it sound, Joe?—'cept maybe a slice o' coin. Still there's reason fer us both ter jump when Bill Lacy whistles. Enyhow thar ain't no use a-talkin 'bout



The Next Instant, Before the Astounded Mexican Could Even Throw Up an Arm in Defense, the Infuriated Girl Struck, the Stinging Lash Raising a Red Welt Across His Swarthy Cheek.

it, fer we've got ter do what we're told. So let's shut up."

"You say you do not know what this all means?"

"No, an' what's more, we don't give a d—n."

"But if I told you it was robbery and murder—that you were aiding in the commission of crime!"

"It wouldn't make a plum bit o' difference, ma'am," said Sikes deliberately, "we never reckoned it was enything else—so yer might just as well stop hollerin,' fer yer goin' whar we take yer, an' ye'll stay thar till Bill Lacy says yer ter go. Hit 'em up, Matt; I'm plum' tired of talkin'."

THE gray dawn came at last, spectral and ghastly, gradually yielding glimpse of the surroundings. They were traveling steadily south, the horses beginning to exhibit traces of weariness, yet still keeping up a dogged trot. All about extended a wild, desolate scene of rock and sand, bounded on every horizon by barren ridges. The only vegetation was sage brush, while the trail, scarcely visible to the eye, would circle here and there among grotesque formations, and occasionally seemed to disappear altogether. Nowhere was there sightest sign of life—no bird, no beast, no snake even, crossed their path. All was dead, silent, stricken with desolation. The spires and chimneys of rock, ugly and distorted in form, assumed strange shapes in the gray dusk. It was all gray wherever the eyes turned; gray of all shades, gray sand, gray rocks, gray overarching sky, relieved only by the soft purple of the sage—a picture of utter loneliness, of intense desolation, which was a horror. The eye found nothing to rest upon—no landmark, no distant tree, no gleam of water, no flash of color—only that dull monotony of drab, motionless, and with no apparent end.

Stella stared about at it, and closed her eyes, unable to bear the sight; her head drooped wearily, every nerve giving away before the depressing scene outspread in every direction. Sikes, watching her slightest movement, seemed to sense the meaning of the action.

"Hell, ain't it?" he said expressively. "You know whar we are?"

"No; but I never before dreamed any spot could be so terrible."

"This is the Shoshone desert; thar ain't nobody ever comes in year 'cept wunst in a while a prospector, maybe, er a band o' cattle rustlers. Even the Injuns keep out."

She lifted her eyes again, shuddering as they swept about over the dismal waste.

"But there is a trail; you could not become lost?"

"Well, yer might call it a trail, tho' thar ain't much left of it after a sand storm. I reckon thar ain't so many as could follow it any time o' year, but Matt knows the way all right—you don't need to worry none about that. He's drove many a load along yere—hey, Matt?"

"You bet; I've got it all marked out, the same as a pilot on the Missouri. Ye see that sway-back ridge yonder?" pointing with his whip into the distance ahead. "That's what I'm headin' for now an' when I git thar a round rock will show up down a sorter gully. Furst time I came over yere long with Lacy, I wrote all these yere things down."

Conversation ceased, the drear depression of the scene resting heavily on the minds of all three. Moore sat humped shapelessly in his seat, permitting the horses to toil on wearily, the wagon rumbling along across the hard packed sand, the wheels leaving scarcely a mark behind. Sikes stared gloomily out on his side, the rifle still between his knees, his jaws working vigorously on a fresh chew of tobacco. Stella looked at the two men, their faces now clearly revealed in the brightening dawn, but the survey brought little comfort. Sikes was evidently of wild blood—a half-breed, if his swarthy skin and high cheek bones meant any characteristics of race—scarcely more than a savage by nature, and rendered even more decadent by the ravages of drink. He was sober enough now, but this only left him the more morose and sullen, his bloodshot eyes ugly and malignant. The girl shrank from him as a full realization of what the man truly was came to her with his first distinct view.

Moore was a much younger man, his face roughened, and tanned, to almost the color of mahogany, yet somehow retaining a youthful look. He was not unprepossessing in a bold, daring way; a fellow who would seek adventure, and meet danger with a laugh. He turned as she looked at him, and grinned back at her, pointing humorously to a badly discolored eye.

"Friend o' yours gave me that," he admitted, quite as a matter of course. "Did a good job, too."

"A friend of mine?" in surprise.

"Sure; you're a friend o' Jim Westcott, ain't yer? Lacy said so, and Jim's the laddy-buck who whaled me."

"Mr. Westcott! When?"

"Last night. You see it was this way: I caught him hanging round the office at La Rosita, an' we had a fight. I don't just know what I did to him, but that's part o' what he did to me. I never knowed much about him afore, but he's sure some scrapper; an' I had a knife in my fist, too."

"Then—then," her breath choking her, "he got away?"

Moore laughed, no evidence of animosity in his actions.

"I reckon so, miss. I ain't seen nuthin' of him since, an' the way Bill Lacy wus cussing when I got breathin' straight agin would 'a' shocked a coyote. He'll git him, tho."

"Get him?"

"Sure—Bill will. He always gets his man. I've seen more'n one fellow try to put something over on Lacy, but it never worked in the end. He's hell on the trigger, an' the next time he and Bill come together, Westcott's bound to get his. Ain't that the truth, Joe?"

Sikes nodded his head, a gleam of appreciation in his eyes.

"I'd like fer to see the scrap," he said slowly. "They tell me Westcott ain't so slow on the draw—but Bill will get him!"

The sun rose a red ball of fire, coloring the ridges of sand, and painting the grotesque rocks with crimson streamers. As it ascended higher into the pale blue of the sky the heat-waves began to sweep across the sandy waste. In the shadow of a bald cliff the wagon was halted briefly, and the two men brought forth materials from within, making a hasty fire, and preparing breakfast. Water was given the team also, before the journey was resumed; while during the brief halt the girl was left to do as she pleased. Then they moved on again, surrounded by the same drear landscape, the very depression of it keeping them silent. Sikes nodded sleepily, his head against a wagon bow. Once Moore roused up, pointing into the distance with one hand.

"What do yer make o' that out thar?" he asked sharply. "'Tain't a human, is it?"

Sikes straightened up with a start, and stared blankly in the direction indicated. Apparently he could perceive nothing clearly, for he reached back in the wagonbox and drew forth a battered field glass, quickly adjusting it to his eyes. Stella's keener vision made out a black, indistinct figure moving against the yellow background of a far-away sand ridge, and she stood up, clinging to Moore's seat to gain a better view. Sikes got the object in focus.

"Nothin' doing," he announced. "It's travelin' on four legs—a b'ar, likely, altho I never afore heard of a b'ar being in yere."

They settled down to the same monotony, mile after mile. The way became rockier, with less said, but with no more evidence of life. A high cliff rose menacingly to their right, bare of the slightest trace of vegetation, while in the opposite direction the plain assumed a dead level, mirages appearing occasionally in the far distance. Far away ahead a strange buttress of rock rose into the sky, resembling the turret of a huge castle. The sun was directly overhead when Moore turned his team suddenly to the left, and drove down a sharp declivity leading into a ravine.

"Drop the canvas, Joe," he said shortly, "there's only 'bout a mile more."

CHAPTER XVIII.
IN MEXICAN POWER.

THE passage was so narrow, and so diversified by sharp turns, that Miss Donovan, shut in behing the closed cover, could perceive little of its nature. Apparently the ravine was a mere gash in the surface of the desert plain, to be originally discovered purely by accident. One might pass a hundred yards to either side and never realize its existence, the hard rock, covered by a thin layer of sand, retaining no trace of wheel-marks in guidance. How Moore had ever driven so unerringly to the spot was a mystery. Yet he had done so, and now the team was slowly creeping down the narrow ledge utilized as a road, the slipping wheels securely locked, as they drifted here and there about the sharp corners, ever descending into the unknown depths.

The cliffs arose precipitously on either side, absolutely bare. To the left nothing could be seen but black rock, but on the other side an open space yawned, perhaps twenty feet across, its bottom imperceptible. The horses stumbled over the rough stones, held only by Moore's firm grip on the reins, and the light began to fade as they descended. At last nothing appeared above but a narrow strip of sky, and the glimmer of sun had totally vanished. Almost at the same moment the driver released the creaking brake, and at a trot the wagon swept forward between two pinnacles of rock, and came out into an open valley.

The transition was so sudden and startling as to cause the girl to give utterance to a cry of surprise. She had been clinging desperately to the seat in front, expecting every instant to be hurled headlong. Intense fear gripped her and it seemed as if every drop of blood in her veins stood still. The change was like a leap into fairyland; as tho they had emerged from the mouth of hell into the beauty of paradise. They were in a green, watered valley, a clear stream wandering here and there thru its center, shadowed by groves of trees. All about, as far as eye could reach, stood great precipices, their bold, rugged fronts rising hundreds of feet, unbroken, and unscalable; the sun directly above bathed

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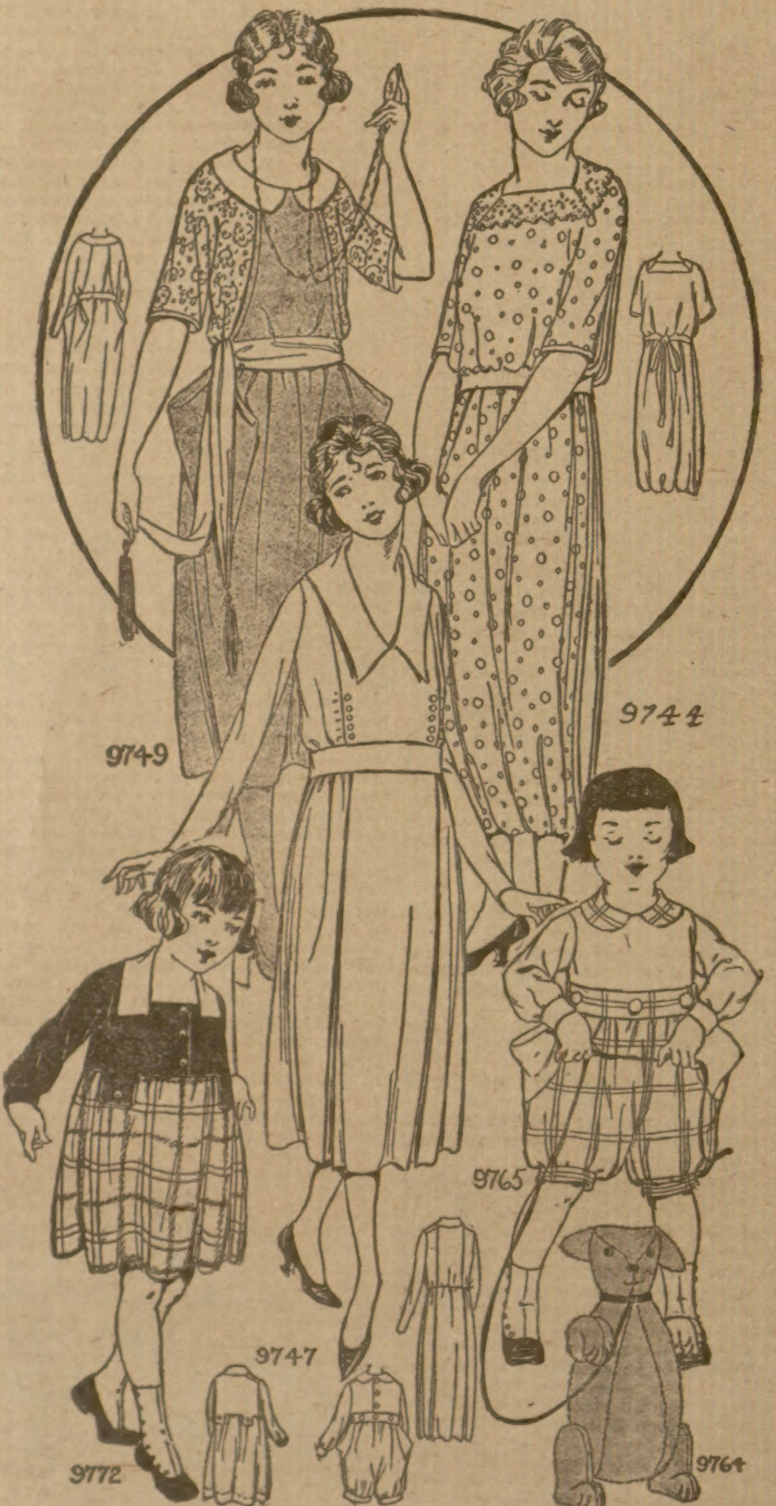

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these with showers of gold, and cast a blanket of color across the sheltered valley.

This valley itself was nearly square, possibly extending not over a mile in either direction, merely a great hole rimmed by desert, a strange, hidden oasis, rendered fertile and green by some outburst of fresh water from the rocks. Emerging upon it in midst of the barren desolution thru which they had been toiling four hours, blinded by alkili dust, jolted down that dangerous decline, it seemed like some beautiful dream, a fantasy of imagination.

Miss Donovan doubted the evidence of her own eyes, half convinced that she slept. It was Moore's voice which aroused her.

"Mendez must have got back, Joe," he said eagerly. "There are horses and cattle over yonder."

The other pushed up the canvas and looked out.

"That's right. Must just got here, or there'd 'a' been a guard up above. The fellow is comin' now—see?"

He was loping along carelessly, Mexican from high hat to jingling spurs, sitting the saddle as tho molded there, a young fellow, dark-faced, but with a livid scar along one cheek.

"Juan Cateras, the little devil," muttered Sikes, as the rider drew nearer. "There's some pot brewing if he is in it."

The rider drew up his horse, and lifted his hat, his smiling lips revealing a row of white teeth.

"A pleasant day, senor," he said graciously, his dark eyes searching the faces of the two men, and then dwelling with interest on the woman. "Ah, your pardon, senorita; your presence is more than welcome here." He rested one hand on the wagon-box, the expression of his face hardening. "Yet an explanation might not be out of place—the Senor Mendez may not be pleased."

"We came under orders from Lacy," replied Moore confidently. "You have seen us both before.'

"True, but not the lady; you will tell me about her?"

Sikes climbed down over the wheel.

"It is like this, senor," he began. "Lacy did not know your party was here; he thought you were all South for another month yet. He would keep this girl quiet, out of the way for a time. She is from New York, and knows too much."

"From New York?" The quick eyes of the Mexican again sought her face. "She is to be held prisoner?"

"Yes, senor."

"Again the case of that man Cavendish?"

"We were not told, only ordered to bring her here, and guard her until we heard otherwise. It was not known you were back."

"We came three hours ago; you see what we brought," with a wave of the hand. "All was clear above?"

"Not a sign; I searched with field-glasses."

"Then I will ride with you to Mendez; 'tis well to have the matter promptly over with."

The wagon rumbled on, Moore urging the wearied team with whip and voice to little result. Sikes remained on foot, glad of the change, striding along in front, while the Mexican rode beside the wheel, his equipment jingling, the sunlight flashing over his bright attire. He made a rather gallant figure, of which he was fully conscious, glancing frequently aside into the shadow beneath the canvas top to gain glimpse of its occupant. At last their eyes met, and he could no longer forbear speech, his English expression a bit precise.

"Pardon, senorita, I would be held your friend," he murmured, leaning closer, "for it is ever a misfortune to incur the enmity of Senor Lacy. You will trust me?"

"But," she ventured timidly, "I do not know you, senor; who you may be."

"You know Senor Mendez?"

She shook her head negatively.

"'Tis strange! Yet I forget you come from New York. They know him here on this border. If you ask these men they will tell you. Even Senor Lacy takes his orders from Pascual Mendez. He care not who he kill, who he fight—some day it come his turn, and then he liberate Mexico—see? The day is not yet, but it will come."

"You mean he is a revolutionist?"

"He hate; he live to hate; to revenge the wrong. Twice already he lead the people, but they fail him—the cowards. He return here where it is safe; yet the right time will come."

"But you, senor?"

"I am his lieutenant—Juan Cateras," and he bowed low, "and I ride now to tell him of his guest."

She watched him as he spurred forward, proud of his horsemanship, and making every effort to attract her attention. Moore turned in his seat, and grinned.

"Some tin soldier," he said sneeringly, "that's a feller I always wanted ter kick, an' some day I'm goin' ter do it."

"You heard what he said?"

"Sure; he was tellin' yer 'bout old Mendez being a Mexican revolutionary leader down in Mex, wa'nt he? Hell of a leader he is! I reckon he's been mixed up in scrapes down thar, but they had mighty little to do with revolutin'. He's just plain bad man, miss—cattle thief, an' all round outlaw. There's a price on his head in three States, but nobody dares go after it, because of the dangerous gang he controls."

Her eyes sought the distant figure doubtfully.

"And this man—this Juan Cateras—what of him?"

"One of the devil's own imps; I'd a heap rather play with a rattlesnake than him." He paused, to assure himself that Sikes was safely out of hearing. "I thought maybe I better tell yer while I had a chance. That fellar is plumb pisen, miss."

She reached out her hand, and touched him.

"Thank you," she said gratefully. "I—I am glad you did. Am—am I to be left here with these—these men?"

"No, not exactly. I suppose they'll naturally sorter expect to run things while they're here, fer this yere valley is their camp. Mendez has been hidin' out yere for some time. But Joe and I are goin' to stay, and even old Mendez ain't liable to make no enemy outer Bill Lacy. They had a row wunst, an' I reckon they don't neither of 'em want another. I ain't greatly afeerd o' Mendez, but I wouldn't put nuthin' past this Cateras lad, if he got some hell idea in his head. He's Injun-Mex, an' that's the worst kind."

THE wagon lurched down a steep bank, splashed its way across the narrow stream, and up the other side, the horses straining in their harness to the sharp snap of the driver's whip. A towering precipice of rock confronted them, and at its very foot stood two cabins of log construction, so closely resembling their stone background as to be almost imperceptible at the distance of a few yards. Sikes leaned on his rifle waiting, and as Moore halted the panting team, and leaped over the wheel to the ground, Cateras came forth from one of the open doors and crossed the intervening space on foot. He was smoking a cigarette, the blue wreath of smoke circling above his head in the still air.

"The lady is to be placed in my care," he said almost insolently. "Your hand, senorita."

Miss Donovan hesitated, the memory of Moore's words of warning yet ringing in her ears. The handsome face, with its smiling lips and eyes, suddenly appeared to her a mask assumed to conceal the unclean soul behind. Moore broke the silence with a protest.

"In your care, senor? The girl is here as a prisoner to Bill Lacy."

"So I told Mendez," he said indifferently. "But he is in ill humor this morning, and took small interest in the affair. It was only when I promised to take full charge that he consented to your remaining at all. 'Tis my advice that you let well enough alone. You know who rules here."

"If there is evil done, the debt will be paid."

Cateras laughed, one hand at his incipient mustache.

"Bill Lacy, no doubt. That is a matter for him to settle with Mendez. It is not my affair, for I only obey my chief. However, senors, 'tis no evil that is contemplated, only we prefer guarding the secrets of this valley ourselves. That is what angers Mendez, the fact that Lacy uses this rendezvous as a prison during our absence. We found one here when we returned—guarded by an American. Now you come with another. Caramba! You think we stand this quietly? How do we know what may result from such acts? What sheriff's posse may be on your trail? Bill Lacy! Dios! If Bill Lacy would make prisoners, let him keep them somewhere else. Mendez takes no prisoners—he knows a better way than doing things like that."

"But, senor, this is a woman."

"Of which I am well aware," bowing gallantly. "Otherwise I should not have interfered, and offered my services. But we have talked enough. You have had the word, and you know the law of our compact. Do you obey me, or shall I call the chief—God be merciful to your soul, if I do."

Moore stood silent, realizing the full meaning of the threat; he glanced aside at Sikes, but that individual only shook his head.

"All right, then," went on the Mexican sharply. "'Tis well you show sense. You know what to do with your team; then the both of you report to Casas at the upper camp—you know him?"

"Yes, senor."

"Tell him I sent you. He will have his orders; they are that you be shot if you attempt to leave before Mendez gives the word. 'Tis not long now till we learn who is chief here—Bill Lacy or Pascual Mendez. Come, senorita, you are safe with me."

Concealing a dread that was almost overpowering, yet realizing the impossibility of resistance, Stella permitted him to touch her hand, and assist her to clamber over the wheel. The baffled, helpless rage in Moore's face was sufficient proof of the true power possessed by Cateras, that his was no idle boast. Under some conditions the change in captors might have been welcomed—certainly she felt no desire to remain in the hands of the two who

(Continued on Page 15.)

Whole Wheat Bubbles

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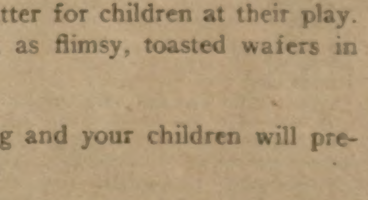

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Sole Makers

Saharan Station 15-M

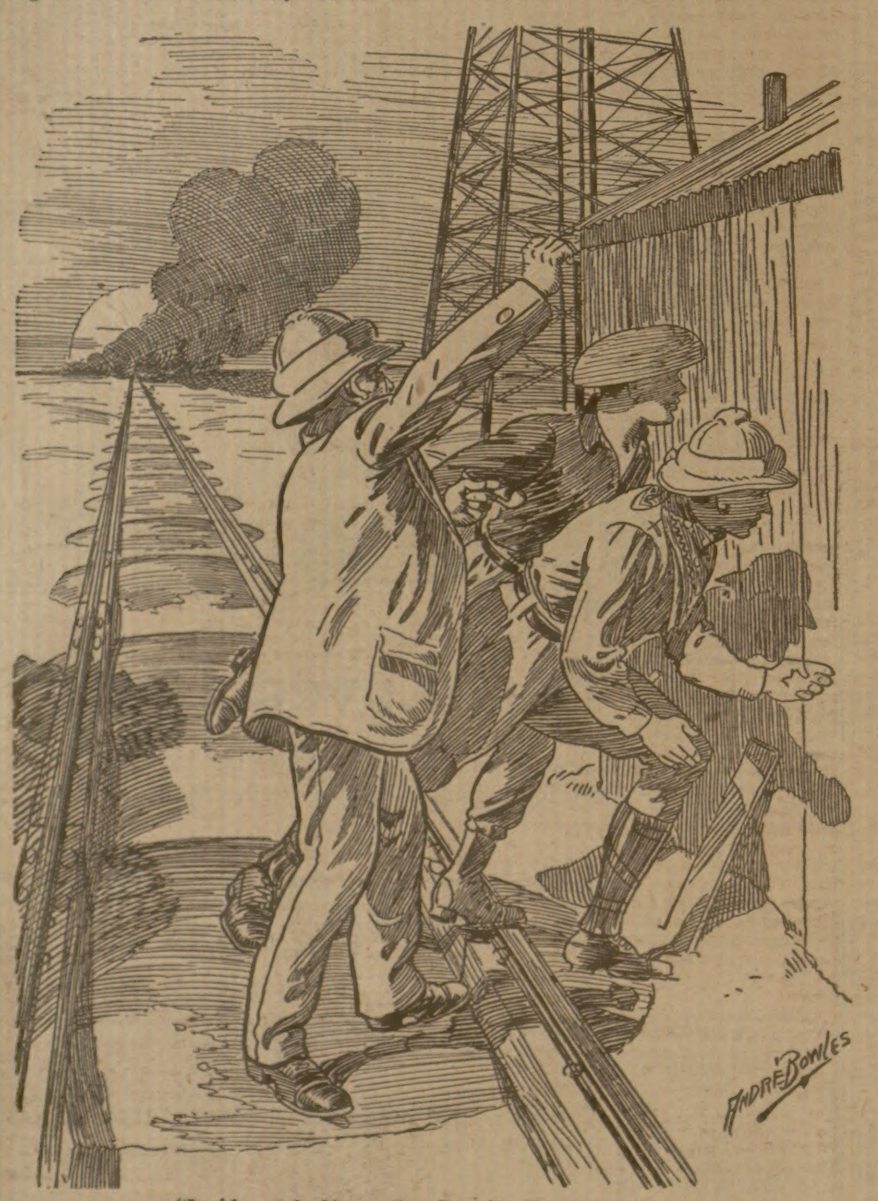
By J. E. Pember

"CLINK-CLANK! Clink-clank!"

Three men crouched in the shelter of a hut made of sheets of corrugated iron. They did not stir. They scarcely breathed. The thermometer indicated a temperature of 135 degrees.

Before the door of the hut rose a skeleton tower of iron beams. It resembled the derrick of a Pennsylvania oil well. Over a wheel at the top of this structure ran a wire rope which, descending perpendicularly, disappeared within a well-like cavity some twenty inches in diameter. The other end was coiled around a drum operated by an electric motor which automatically started — stopped — reversed — stopped—started. Up and down, up and down, moved the cable with monotonous regularity. "Clink-clank! Clink-clank!" It was the only sound that disturbed the intense, suffocating stillness.

Outside, the horizon line receded to the uttermost limit of vision in all directions. A level waste of yellow sand met the eye wherever it turned, reflecting the almost vertical rays of the sun with an indescribable fierceness. The atmosphere swam in shimmering streaks.



"Inside and Close the Door!" Shouted Belleau.

The enormous palpitating disc of the desert was bisected by a single line of rails which dwindled to vanishing points to the north and to the south. The rails rested on broad bases of metal like huge, inverted soup plates, which enabled the road to lie firmly upon the treacherous sand. Between the rails was placed the insulated cable which brought the electrical current to the motor. A semaphore signal, planted upright in the sand like a contorted skeleton, a few scattered tools, some bits of piping and abandoned pieces of machinery, completed the catalog of objects of definite outline. The motor buzzed drowsily:—

"Clink-clank! clink-clank!"

This particularly undesirable spot upon the world's surface was marked on the map of the new Trans-Saharan Railway as Station 15-M. The railway was the latest audacious engineering exploit of the French. It connected Algiers in a mathematically straight line with Timbuctoo, and was expected to bring the riches of the eastern Soudan to the Mediterranean shores. Station 15-M was full four hundred miles north of the southern terminus, in the hottest heart of the great Sahara, just under the line of the tropic. The three men in the hut were drilling an artesian well that, when pierced, would create an artificial oasis. The drilling apparatus was perfectly made and almost human in its intelligence. It would work for hours without Belleau, the chief, touching a lever.

Belleau was an old gray man, wedded to one idea, the success of the Trans-Saharan. Littlefield, his assistant, was an American, young and enthusiastic. Colet was a student of the Technological school, who acted as helper and general utility man.

"Ah, how infernally hot this is!" muttered Colet at last, as he tried vainly to find a place where it was a degree or two cooler. "What wouldn't I give for a good swim now!"

"Keep still, there's a good fellow," expostulated Littlefield. "You are kicking up this dry sand and it won't settle again in a dog's age. Don't knock all our grub over, either. The Tauregs may stop the supply train, and vegetables don't grow in this country. There! you've gone and done it!"

For Colet had given another roll and dislodged a pile of boxes of provisions which, with a miscellaneous lot of clothing and instruments, came crashing down in a heap.

When they had been restored to their places Belleau awoke from a troubled slumber. He glanced at his watch and then, pulling his coat collar up to shield his neck from the solar heat, crossed the interval between the hut and the tower.

"Four thousand feet," he murmured. "Decidedly in forty-eight hours we ought to reach the water-bearing strata."

By turning a lever he reversed the electric apparatus rapidly and the drum began to wind the wire rope. When it was full another was deftly substituted, and after that a third. Then the machinery stopped and the heavy metal drill emerged from the black depths of the well, bringing with it a volume of dark earth, which, tumbling down a trough prepared for its reception, poured over the tawny desert sand. It was a curious contrast of hues.

The engineer fingered the soil. It was loose and friable. He smelled it and even tasted it.

"We have not yet reached the belt of clay which confines the subterranean reservoirs," he said.

Once more, with a humming sound, the drill vanished into the depths, the wire rope rattled furiously as it unwound, and then the apparatus resumed its work.

"Clink-clank! Clink-clank!"

WHEN the sun declined it was obscured by a curious mouse-colored cloud rising from the West.

"Can it be a thunder-storm?" asked Littlefield.

"Worse," answered the chief; "it is a sand-storm, the terrible simoom. I fear we are in great danger."

With incredible swiftness the "Devil of the Sahara" advanced. Where the three men stood a deathlike stillness prevailed. The outlines of the tower seemed drawn in sepia on a background of fiery orange. Long, snaky fingers of smoke came reaching out over the sky, wriggling fantastically.

Then a wall of gray mist came sweeping over the desert, and the awe-stricken beholders saw the sand caught up in vast, whirling columns. A dull, booming sound, like that of breakers on hidden reefs, smote upon their ears.

"Inside and close the door!" shouted Belleau. The engineers hastened into the hut and secured the door.

In a moment, it seemed, the storm was upon them. The atmosphere became black as midnight. A sonorous hum, like the diapason of some mighty cathedral organ, filled all the dome of heaven. There were sounds of titanic buffetings and demoniac yells. It was as if all the ancient fiends of the Sahara had gathered to overwhelm its presumptuous invaders. Had not the hut been strongly bolted together it would have been torn to pieces. The fiery particles hissed against its iron sides like a discharge of shot. Sand sifted thru the cracks until the three men, their heads wrapped in cloths, were almost stifled.

For a moment it seemed as tho they were to be buried deep in a living grave. Then, as quickly as it came, the simoom fled away, and the sun, now red as blood, threw his level beams across the plain. The drilling apparatus was not injured. Its delicate machinery was so protected that the sand could not reach it.

Then a terrible discovery was made. Colet, his throat burning with thirst, approached the tank which contained their supply of water. He found the tap open and the tank empty.

The lad gave a cry. His companions rushed to the spot. "All gone—wasted!" he moaned.

It was true. Not a drop remained. When the pile of supplies had fallen over, the tap had been knocked open and the thirsty sand had drunk the precious liquid.

"If the train doesn't get here tomorrow we shall be in a fix," observed the assistant engineer.

Belleau shook his head. "The sandstorm has blocked the rails," he said. "No engine can pass until the plows have made a path for it. That will take many hours, and a man cannot live many hours in the Sahara without water."

"Let us walk to the next station," suggested Colet.

"It is two hundred miles. If one of us tried it he would perish before he had accomplished one quarter of the distance," replied the gray chief. His eyes turned toward the drill.

"There is one hope, then!" cried the American, following the direction of his gaze. "If the drill reaches the water-bearing levels in time we shall be saved."

The old engineer bowed his head silently.

"Clink-clank! Clink-clank!"

The long night had dragged away and the garish sun shot into view once more. The three men, haggard, gasping, with parched throats, avoided meeting one another's gaze. The drill had gnawed its way deeper into the bowels of the earth, but there were no signs of water. The frightful agonies of prolonged thirst had set in. The victims neglected to note the passage of time, but lay in a sort of stupor. At intervals the chief tested the borings. "It will soon be over, one way or the other," he whispered to his assistant.

Towards the middle of the afternoon Colet collapsed with all the symptoms of violent sunstroke. His face became almost black. His pulses beat furiously. "Water!" he muttered, with cracked lips. His companions turned away. Then followed delirium. He murmured of running streams and splashing fountains. Death comes quickly when the thermometer marks 135 degrees on the Sahara. The poor lad suddenly sprang to his feet, and, staggering from the hut, he put his palms together above his head and dived, as one dives from a river bank, headlong into the black shadow of the tower, streaming across the sand. When Littlefield reached him he was dead.

THE sun completed its circuit and sank like a plummet toward the western horizon. Belleau and his assistant feebly tried the boring again. The drill was withdrawn with some difficulty. When it came to the surface it was coated with stiff clay, cool to the touch. The old engineer pointed to it. He could not speak. It was a question of a few hours now.

Belleau, completely exhausted, threw

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himself down on the sand at the door of the hut and seemed to sleep. Littlefield, lying flat on his back, tried to gaze thru the gray depths of the zenith. Suddenly, far above, he perceived a black spot that hovered and circled in a wide orbit. It seemed to be watching intently. A sickness of utter horror and despair came upon the young man.

He approached his chief and touched the shoulder of the still form. There was no response. "Belleau!" he exclaimed, with hoarse emphasis. No answer. He passed his hand over the temple fringed with gray locks. The flesh was chill and harsh. The heart had ceased to beat. The old engineer had passed away as peacefully as a baby goes to sleep within its mother's encircling arms. The drill never stopped.

"Clink-clank! Clink-clank!"

When Littlefield opened his eyes again the lids seemed to grate heavily upon the balls. He looked up. The gray sky was gone and the odious black spot with it. It was night, and over the velvet depths of space the imperial tropic stars were passing in majestic procession. They shone with wonderful brilliancy.

The young engineer gazed drowsily at them. He felt strangely comfortable as he lay there upon the sand. The tormenting thirst had ceased. He did not even feel surprised when he found that his limbs had lost the power of motion. Life seemed concentrated in a small area of the brain just behind the eyes. He perceived nothing but those glorious wheeling stars—some red, some blue, some of a yellow luster.

Then came fleeting visions of a far distant landscape. A New England house, white clapboarded, with prim green shutters—great elm trees overarching, and the continual gurgle of a brook, flowing underneath a plank bridge—all the odorus sweets of June were in the air, and he was walking up the path. A slight girl stood at the gate and stretched out her hands to him, smiling angelically with brown eyes that looked clearly into his own.

"Harry," she said, and her voice sounded like the far-away tinkle of a silver bell, "you have come at last."

Then the light went out like a glowing coal, and only the great calm, desert stars looked down pityingly.

"Clink-clank! Clink-clank!"

But when the day came the great drill had ceased its clanking. In those hours of darkness the waters under the earth, liberated from their prison, had burst with impetuous force thru the vent, tossed the machine aside, and the first rays of the sun were reflected on the ebullient flood that bubbled up from the well, gushed in rainbow spray around the iron posts of the tall derrick, filled the hollows beside the track with crystal pools, and then hastened by the three dark, silent forms that heeded it not, before plunging once more into the sands that gave it birth.

The Vixen

(Concluded From Page 4.)

possession of the human body.

"Pistols!" shrieked Pringle; "Pistols!" But the men with pistols could find no opportunity to draw upon the demons without the certainty of striking the fair toy that formed the center of that tornado.

A human scream issued from it in a ghastly, trailing passion of pain. What was Carlos thinking of! Had he lost his senses, too, to go to certain death? With a crying impulse to battle for her, granted it was certain death, he battered at the outskirts on the trapezes up there, shouldering and buffetting in an endeavor to force a wedge in that mass. Finally, in the straining and swaying, there came a momentary space between two gorillas. He seized it, but as he did so they and their neighbors espied him. They turned bared, open jaws and imbecilic eyes upon him. Word spread like fire and Carlos, having witnessed the moment of their transferring their attention from Iris to him, found himself confronted by the hideous eyes and grinning muzzles of the whole army of them.

"He's giving his life for her," whispered many a wife to her husband, hiding her eyes in fainting horror.

Carlos lunged with one desperate move into a temporary alley, to the Vixen and the limp Iris wedged under its mighty arm—and dared to seize the waist of the Vixen's prey.

And then the thing happened. With an unearthly jibbering and a shiek that made strong men gasp, the monster suddenly surrendered the booty as in a frenzy, and the entire swarm, from their momentary paralysis, scattered frantically and in panic, flew over ring and trapeze, scurried past rope and pole, pounced to the ground in a variety of places, scampered across the sawdust and sailed like cowards into their yet-open cage, piling and cowering into the furthest corners of it in abject terror.

They had seen their master, Job.

CARLOS bore his Iris sturdily past the crowds and thru the night into her tent where, monkey-face and all, he kissed the clear, flushed features in an hysteria of thanksgiving at her deliverence. A doctor, Mr. Pringle and the Mannerings excitedly followed at his heels. Carlos, reluctant to relinquish her upon her bed to an accompaniment of chatter and talk, most of which was done by the doctor, a small, brown-bearded man who had been secured that day to attend Iris. Most of what he said passed Carlos unheeded until he made a query about "her monkey, Carlos."

"Which one was this monkey Carlos that she was begging me to bring to her this afternoon? It is very likely she went to that cage to seek him. Do you leave the cage door open?"

Mr. Pringle answered. "By no means," he said, "but the key hangs in the office petitioned off from the main tent. She must have seen the trainer get it there."

The doctor went back to his "pulse." Mr. Mannering, who had been talking with Mrs. Mannering, approached Carlos softly.

"My dear lad," he said. "If you will, we want you, too, to come to live with us as our son—to help watch over Miss Iris. If she is not to get well—we want you just the same. As for accepting what we should like to give you, we could make it a loan dating from the time you will come of age, if that arrangement will make you happier."

Just then the doctor interrupted with another bulletin. "There is no damage," he said in stilted English. "The heart action is still exaggerated, but not dangerously so. And the breathing is now normal."

He regarded the patient again more curiously.

"Hah!" he cried. "The measles have broken out!" He was jumping about like a squirrel in the joy of scoring another professional success. "I have brought her measles out. You see, my friends, now her recovery begins. If the measles hadn't come out she would have died of the poisoning in another twelve hours, so long were they past due!"

Carlos had his gorilla's head off by this time and was on his knees at the bedside.

"Will you come, my boy, with her?" asked Mannering.

"Do, dear," Mrs. Mannering said. "We want you."

Carlos looked with dazed, but sparkling black eyes which told worlds—from one to the other.

"I—I—oh, thank you, ma'am, I—sure will."

* * *

What the Pretty Typist Left.

AS JONES entered, the pretty little girl at the typewriter was gazing at the solitaire on her finger. She didn't look up until after the door had been closed; then she glanced at the young man and said, "Oh," in rather an absent form.

Jones passed his hat from one hand to the other, nervously. "I am the new man," he finally ventured to say. "The boss sent me to you."

The pretty girl smiled. "Oh, yes," she replied. "You are to take my place, I believe," and resumed her gaze on the ring.

Jones showed some signs of embarrassment. "I—er—hope—that is, I didn't know——"

"Oh, that's perfectly all right," replied the pretty girl. "I'm not leaving on your account. It's on the account of another young man. You see, I am going to be married, and since I am the third girl to leave to get married, the boss just thought he'd better hire a man."

"Oh, I see," said Jones cheerfully. "The boss said that I would be writing letters most of the time, and I love to write letters. I suppose you were kept very busy."

The pretty girl looked up from her solitaire long enough to study Jones for a moment, and a gleam of pity fluttered into her big blue eyes; and she quickly said: "Oh, yes, it keeps me quite busy to answer all the mail."

"That's what I have heard of this great firm. Yes, it must bewonderful."

Once more the young lady looked down upon the solitaire, and for a few seconds a little smile played about the corners of her mouth. Then she said: "Did you ever—feel—feel that you were just some one else far away—doing things that you never did before—thinking things that you never thought of before, and, in fact, felt that you were some one else other than yourself?"

Jones tried hard to conceal his thoughts, but he sized her up as crazy, or just a bit unbalanced over the marriage question. He walked toward the door, but spoke up bravely. "Why, no," he said. "I can't say that I have."

The pretty little blue-eyed girl arose, put on her hat and coat, and with one long look at the solitaire, drew on her neat-looking gloves.

"Well, then," she said, "it's up to you to get the feeling and the pep. The boss wants 500 new firms on his mailing list—all new names and all new towns to work on. There's the typewriter. Go to it—it's up to you, kid! So long, I'm going to be married!"

For the Ledger Girls and Boys

Elephant's Charm on Wane.

ELEPHANTS at the Bronx zoo, in upper New York City, are apparently as contented as in days gone by; or, to be more accurate, they do not seem to be any more melancholy. But to take the opinion of one of the keepers whose work it is to attend to their daily diet, the lot of the elephant is not entirely a happy one. The main reason for this, he declares, is that the peanut is fast becoming extinct in the zoo.

"I'm sure I don't know why an elephant should like peanuts," said the keeper, with a sad shake of his head. "But they surely do. I can remember many an elephant that was cross and dangerous on rainy days when there were no visitors and the peanut supply fell down for that reason.

"There was Betsy, who died several years ago, for instance. She was always friendly and gentle when there were youngsters about to throw peanuts to her. Betsy went three days once without her favorite dish and no one dared go near her.

"The reason for the lack of peanuts is the high cost. Nowadays they are a luxury for humans to eat. You remember the big bag you used to be able to get for a nickel? Well, try to get one like it these days!"

"And then, of course, the children aren't interested in the zoo the way they used to be. Today the movies are more exciting, and so many kids have their own automobiles. The elephant has seen his best day as an entertainer."

* * *

Fun for Boys in Japan.

I FEEL sorry for the little boys in Japan," said Ted. "They have no nice holidays like ours, have they? And they go to bed when it is time for us to get up."

"Well, you don't need to feel sorry for them," said Uncle Harry, who had just returned from a stay in Tokyo. "To be sure they go to bed when you get up, but then you are asleep while they are playing their games and going to school and having a good time. As for holidays—well, the little Jap boys enjoy their Flag day just as much as you enjoy the Fourth of July."

"Flag day in Japan? On June 14th, like ours? Oh, tell me about it, do," pleaded Ted.

So Uncle Harry said he would.

"The Japanese Flag day is celebrated each year on the 5th of May. For a long time before the great day, the boys are looking forward to the event and planning celebrations. They have mock wars and real sports. Each boy makes for himself toy swords and weapons and these are exhibited to admiring friends and family. The city is a veritable land of flags, for before each house in which a baby boy has been born that year there floats a large bag representing an enormous fish. These fish flags are made either of paper or cloth and highly colored they are. The fish is usually hollow so that the wind can get in between the two sides and blow it up like a balloon. It is a strange sight to see these hundreds of inflated fish that appear to be huge sea monsters struggling against the current of the wind. The fish pictured on the flags is the carp, and is symbolic of struggles and strivings which each boy is expected to make to achieve something in the world.

"The festival of the flags is called by the Japanese 'Nobori-no-Sekhu' and is enjoyed by the grown-ups quite as much as by the children. The parents of the boys are filled with pride and high hopes for the future accomplishments and achievements of their sons, and all are happy on Flag day in anticipation of the good years to come."

* * *

Sympathetic.

LITTLE Mary Ellen McKee is, as she terms it, "just half past 4," and lives around the corner from the Union Hospital in Terre Haute. Recently she received a tricycle, which she rides morning, noon and night. At first her rides were confined to her own street, but the other day she wished to ride around the corner.

"But the little sick children at the hospital will see you, and then they'll be unhappy because they can't ride, too," her mother told her.

Mary Ellen was silent a minute. Then she said, earnestly, "Well, then mother, I won't ride it past the hospital. When I get in front of it I'll get off and push it like it was hard work, and then they won't be unhappy. They'll be glad they can lie in bed and not have to push things like tricycles."

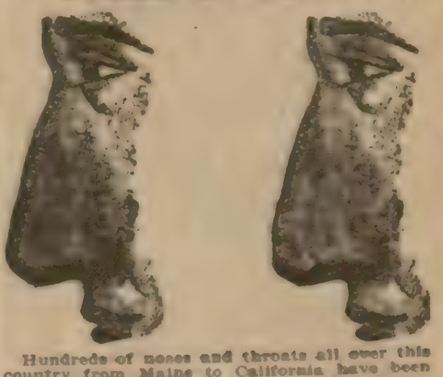
* * *

That Horrid Word Again.

"What's the matter?" cried Mrs. Jones when Bobby came running into the house in tears, dragging his little tin sword behind him and rubbing the seat of his trousers. "I thought you were having such a good time playing soldier."

"We were," sobbed Bobby, "and I was Sherman, and papa heard me."

Noses and Throats Freed of Catarrh!



Hundreds of noses and throats all over this country from Maine to California have been freed from Catarrh with its annoying features. These noses and throats were pretty bad—some of them. They had bothered their owners for long periods. The noses had been stopped up—crusts formed—mucus gathered and made discharges which had to be constantly blown out on handkerchiefs.

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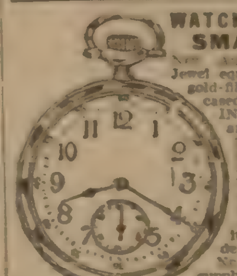

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A Powerful and Dramatic Story of a Beautiful Vampire

The Pirate Woman

By Captain A. E. Dingle

Refresh Your Memory With This

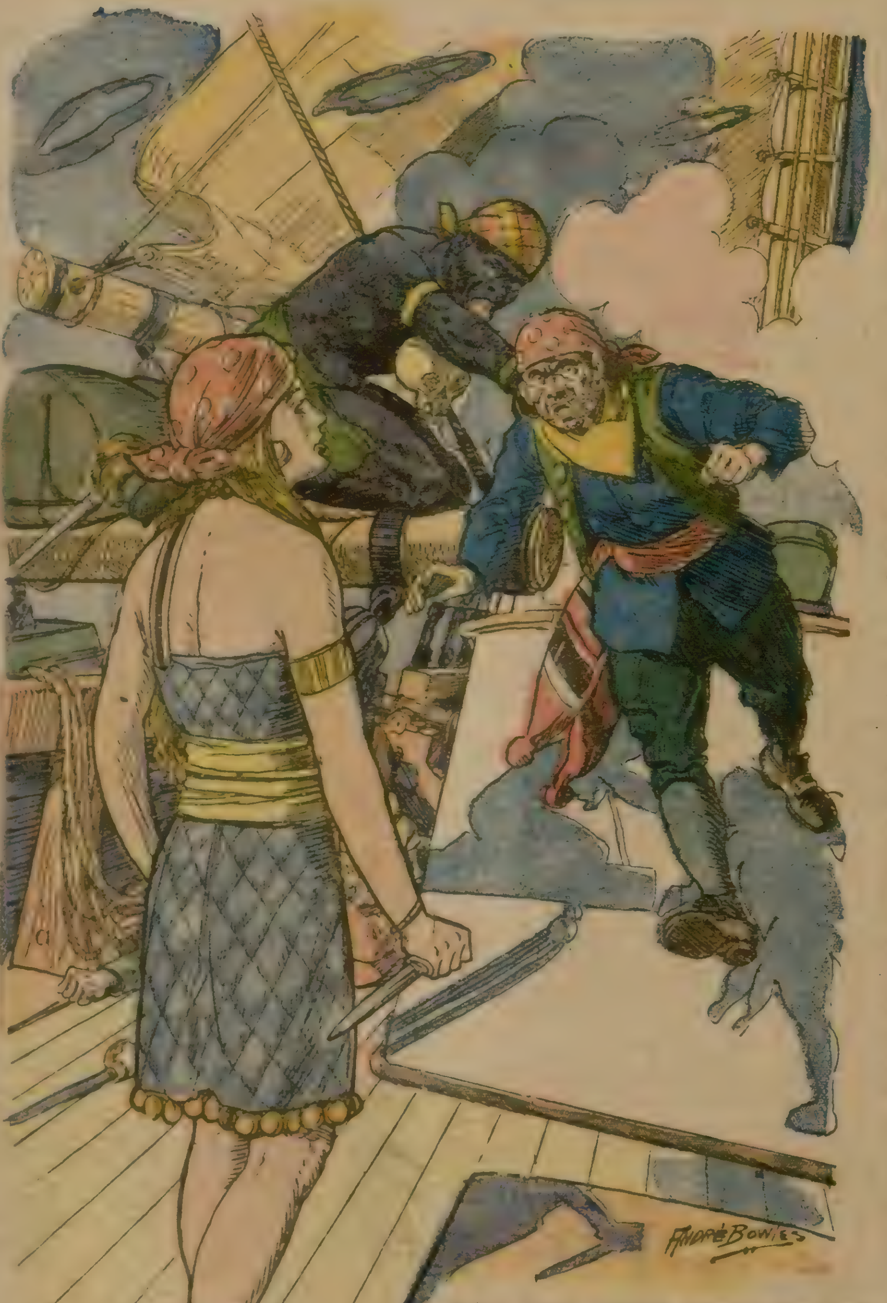
RUPERT VENNER, wealthy idler and owner of the costly schooner yacht, Feu Follet, with Craik Tomlin and John Pearse among his small party of guests, became becalmed off the island inhabited by the pirates and were induced to go ashore to meet Dolores, the pirate queen, whose beauty they had been told of by the girl, Pascherette, and Milo, the giant. Sancho, he of the one eye, was commanded to look after the yacht, then lying aground in the harbor. "Care for it as tho it were mine," was the pirate woman's final order to her servant.

Sancho, however, turned traitor to his mistress and joined Yellow Rufe's gang of mutineers in an attack on the armed craft and its crew. The gang's attempt to loot and capture the vessel was foiled by Dolores and Milo, after the yacht's costly furnishings had been badly wrecked and several, perhaps all, of her sailors killed. When the pirate woman and the big Abyssinian returned from the yacht, from which she and the herculean black had driven Yellow Rufe and his men, Dolores announced to her faithful subjects that she had captured the rich man's yacht for herself and ordered its owner and his two companions to be locked up as prisoners. The capture of Yellow Rufe and Sancho was also ordered, and the queen's words were wildly cheered by the faithful among her followers.

The millionaire and his two companions put up a good fight, but were conquered and placed in separate quarters. Dolores visited Venner and made violent love to him, offering him all her vast riches if he would take her away and become "her mate." He couldn't marry her, he explained, he already having a wife and children. In her rage she attacked him savagely, thus demonstrating her amazing strength and agility, but each assault ended with such loving caresses and passionate kisses as to fairly bewilder him, her simple, clinging costume only enhancing her sublime beauty, now fully appreciated by the dazzled rich man of the world. "Good night, beloved!" she said as she left him.

To prove her love for Milo, Pascherette, suspected of aiding Sancho, after being whipped by the giant promised to lure the fugitive pirate back to the village, by telling him that a full pardon and a rich reward would be his from the hands of the queen. Sancho took the bait and after being shown the queen's stores of gold and gems was forced to drink poisoned blood of Red Jabez, the dead corsair, a presumably fatal dose. About this time a great commotion broke out in the village and the queen was told that Yellow Rufe and his men had put to sea in their sloop. The cause of the village uproar is explanned in the following chapters.

This story began in No. 22, the Ledger for May 28. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.



Milo's Hand Gripped Him by the Neck From Behind and Swung Him Bodily Off His Feet.

CHAPTER XIII.

"HELL'S breath!" screamed Caliban, as the cry rang out. "Have ye devils in the Grove, mistress?"

Hanglip, and Spotted Dog, too, cringed back in fright. Stumpy concealed his uneasiness, yet his eyes searched Dolores' face questioningly. None truly believed in the queen's magic powers; yet none was bold enough to openly avow his unbelief; and the added grimness of the storm, assisted by the unearthliness of that howl of anguish, brought the four godless pirates to the verge of superstitious terror.

"Yes, I keep my devils there," replied Dolores, "and that is the traitor Sancho answering to them for his perfidy. So watch, and obey me, lest thy cries, too, go up from my altar!"

She stood apart at the great stone, listening, and presently Milo rolled up the rock barrier and appeared in the gloom calm and cool as if he had no association with devils, imaginary or otherwise. A vivid lightning flash played on his features, and the pirates drew back, muttering at his black eyes which glowed with red points like rubies in the heart of twin couls.

"Milo, there flies Rufe," said Dolores, flinging an arm seaward. Beyond the false point, in the midst of black seas dappled with rushing white horses, under a lowering black sky that seemed to lean down to the verge of the ocean itself, Rufe's sloop was pictured in the next flash of electric radiance a thing of desolation and panic. Full three miles away, the craft vanished in the pervading blackness between every flash; it appeared, diminishing swiftly, as regularly. "I need thy condor's vision now as never before. Take the swift small sailboat, and flares; follow the sloop as long as thy eye can pick her out; we shall follow thy flares in the schooner until we overtake thee. Haste now; Rufe has grace enough!"

Milo stayed only to get his flare powder and tinder-box; then disappeared down the cliff. Dolores dispatched her four attendants to the schooner, prepared to follow, then with an afterthought halted two of them.

"Here, Hanglip, Spotted Dog, wait!" She swiftly entered the Council Hall, went to the three small chambers, and released her captives from the ringbolts. Driving them before her, bewildered by the sudden emergence from tranquillity to the turmoil of the storm, she gave the two pirates each a chain, held the other herself, and led the way down to the stranded yacht. Her motive was not only uncertainty about the people left at the camp, who might prove susceptible to bribery if not pity; she also felt a sort of whimsical desire to impress these strangers with the utter inevitability of her power.

The Feu Follet lay on the edge of the bar, as she had lain since stranding, except that with tide after tide her keel had worn itself a place in the sand, and she was less closely held than before. Of her rightful crew but five survived the fight; one was the sailing master, Peters, and all were imprisoned under jailers in the forecastle. On the schooner's sloping decks when Dolores and her party climbed aboard, were a score of nondescript pirates besides the crew's custodians, at a loss to account for the escape of the sloop and worked up to a pitch of nervousness where they were only fit for sudden, strenuous action with a merciless taskmaster. And such they speedily had.

Dolores ordered her three captives to be taken to the great cabin, and their chains were fastened to the ornately paneled mainmast which ran down thru both decks and formed the support of a gorgeously furnished sideboard. Then the companionway was locked on them, and the girl sprang to tremendous life.

"Aloft with you, Stumpy," she cried, selecting him because after Milo his eyes were keenest of them all. "Keep thy eyes open for Milo's flares, and mark well the direction. Hanglip, thou surly dog! take ten men and lay me out a good anchor astern, with a stout hawser. Be brisk! Come aboard in ten minutes, or thy back shall smart."

Sancho's boat had remained at the port quarter, and into this Hanglip drove his crew while Spotted Dog with the rest of the men got ready an anchor to lower to them.

"Caliban, cast off the gaskets from fore and main!" cried Dolores next. "Where are thy rascals? Plague take thee, hunchback! Could'st not say there were not men enough? Below with ye, and bring up the schooner's people. Have me sail on this vessel before that anchor takes hold, or I'll flay thy hump!"

Cursing venemously the deformed little demon sprang into the forecastle and drove up Peters and his four men with kicks and blows. They, too, were bewildered by the tremendous uproar of sea and wind, and went like sheep to the fore and main masts at Caliban's bidding.

"Ready for the anchor—lower away!" roared Hanglip in the boat, where already was piled coil on coil a great hemp hawser.

"Handsomely, ye dogs, handsomely!" shrieked Spotted Dog in turn; the anchor sank into the boat to the screeching of tackles and the groaning of boat-timbers, and was carried out astern.

"Carry the end aft!" Dolores commanded; the hawser was taken along and the end passed around the quarterdeck capstan. "Up with those sails!" cried the girl now, and Caliban's gang sweated at the halliards, while slackened sheets permitted the booms to swing and present the luffs to the screaming gale, bearing no resistance. And while the boat pulled away into the darkness astern, carrying the anchor to the full scope of the cable, Dolores kept her eyes ever aloft, and over the sea, and upon every detail of the work. Her eyes fell upon Peters, standing in sullen mood at the belaying-pin which held a turn of the main throat halliards. And as the croaking cry of Caliban ordered "Belay!" she called Peters to her.

"Thou 'rt sailing master, hey?"

"I was."

"Art still, if thy heart is as stubborn as thy face!" cried Dolores, laughing at his scowl. "Canst sail thy ship now?"

"I can sail any ship that floats, but not I nor your sharks can sail this schooner now," he replied surlily. "Your false marks did their work well."

"Then thou'd rather pull a rope that hold a wheel, hey? 'Tis but a wooden sailor, after all. I hoped such a ship would boast a seaman as master. I'll show thee seamanship, sheep-heart!"

Out of the darkness astern came a roar:

"Anchor down! Heave away!"

And from the darkness aloft Stumpy bawled:

"There she flares! Mother of me!" The prayer, curse, exclamation, whatever the last words might be, were called forth by a paralyzing flash of lightning that shone over the raging sea like a gigantic calcium light. The schooner's deck resounded with superstitious howls, which rose to awed cries from the weakest as from trucks and gaff-ends glowed and flickered the blue brush of Saint Elmo's Fire.

"Heave away!" Dolores' voice rang out on the hubbub, forcing obedience even in face of terror. The capstan went round to the urge of a dozen pair of fear-stimulated arms; and fathom by fathom the great cable came in dripping and glistening; fathom after fathom was heaped on the deck, and still the schooner remained fast. And even from aloft came Stumpy's hail, reporting Milo's flare fast fading in distance.

"You can't do it! I knew it!" shouted Peters, defiantly.

"Peace, sheep!" answered Dolores, slapping him upon the mouth. She stood at the wheel, and no part of the vessel's situation escaped her. She had yet a trump to play; a hazardous one, truly, but the big one. The big fore and mainsails swung and crashed idly at their sheets, filling the air with the thunder of their flinging blocks. At each boom a seaman stood, and each held the double block of a boom-tackle, waiting the word that now came.

"Clap on those boom-tackles!" Dolores commanded, and four men flew to each as it was hooked to the rigging. "Haul away! Boom the sails square out!" The great sails filled with a crash as the gale took them on the foreside, flinging them violently aback.

"You'll pluck the spars out of her!" screamed Peters, in a frenzy now as his cherished masts whipped and cracked to the tremendous backward strain. Dolores ignored the crazed man, but a scornful smile wreathed about her lips and her dark eyes gleamed. "Out with them!" she cried. "More hands there! And heave, ho, heave away on the capstan! Burst thy arms, bullies! Here comes Hanglip and his bold lads to help ye! Round with her! Out with them! Heave, good bullies!"

THE girl stood by her wheel, a splendid figure of matchless energy and courage. Aloft the topmasts bent like whips; Stumpy's voice came down in ever increasing fear as his perch grew shakier; the great expanse of canvas, which should have been treble-reefed even in a floating ship going forward, tore at boom-tackles and earrings, tacks and mast-hoops, shaking the vessel to the keel and filling her with cataclysmic thunder.

"By the bones of Red Jabez, she comes!" roared Spotted Dog, peering over the side. "Heave, lads, and never doubt the girl again! Fiends o' Tophet! See her slide!"

The schooner shuddered from forefoot to sternpost; the big hawser slipped in thru the lead with gathering speed, the groaning masts imparted an impulse to her that drove her astern like an arrow, and, now, triumphantly, Dolores cried:

"An ax! Quickly—cut the hawser! Caliban, get a jib loosed! Hanglip, open the companionway, and bring up my prisoners. I would have them enjoy the sail."

A curling sea poured over the taffrail, sweeping Dolores from her feet; she met it with a ringing laugh, gripping the wheel as her safeguard, and the moment the ax severed the hawser she gave the vessel a sheer with the helm, and again her orders rang out:

"Let go both boom-tackles! Hoist away the jib! Haul the jib-sheet to starboard, and stand-by fore and main-sheets!"

Out of the darkness ahead came the fluttering of canvas, and soon Caliban's hoarse croak rang aft. "Hoist away th' jib!" The great booms swung amidships again when the tackles were cast off, and now the headsail flew up the stay, the restrained sheet to starboard causing the canvas to fill aback as had the greater sails before. But now the pressure was ahead and to one side; the schooner's head began to fall off, then faster as she gained momentum, and the fore and mainsails again began to thunder at their blocks.

"Let draw the jib! Bring in the fore-sheet; bear a hand aft here, mainsheet, lads, smartly!" cried Dolores, twirling the wheel to meet the vessel's swift lee-ward leap. And as the liberated Feu Follet heeled dizzily to the gale, under full spread of sail, and her owner and his guests appeared into the storm, Stumpy's cry rang out:

"There's the flare—and she's burnin' steady!"

CHAPTER XIV.

"HOW bears the flare?" Dolores demanded, steadying the helm.

"Three points on lee-bow!" came from aloft.

"Sing out when we point for it!" Dolores gave the wheel a few spokes, and at her command the main-sheet was rendered until the schooner fell off from the wind and Stumpy hailed: "Steady! She heads fair for it!"

"Does it still burn?"

"Aye, blazing bright! And low down, too, for the seas hide it every moment!"

"Keep thy eyes skinned, and seek for the sloop, too."

The schooner came to a more even keel as she squared away from the gale, and the splendid speed of the craft sent a thrill thru Dolores as thru the least impressionable pirate of the gang. Fast as Rufe's sloop was, this dainty plaything of wealth and leisure sped over the snarling seas at a gait that promised to overhaul the smaller vessel two fathoms to one.

Even Rupert Venner and his friends, shivering with the wet and sudden change from the cabin to the deck tho they were, found much to soothe them in the glorious sweep and swing of the Feu Follet; much to admire and envy in the perfect poise and sang-froid of the magnificent creature at the wheel.

Dolores stood on feet as steady as the great deep eyes that were fixed on the compass card before her. Her heavy, lustrous hair streamed about her from under the golden circlet; in each lightning flash she stood out a thing of wild, awful beauty; the rain glistened on her bare shoulders and arms, rendering her golden skin a glistening, fairylike armor. And the blustering wind caught her wet tunic, and wrapped it about her closely and tightly, revealing every grace and glory of her perfect body.

"Saints! Was there ever such a creature!" said Tomlin, hoarsely. Pearse's face was set and grim; he made no rejoinder. Venner, too, kept silent; but his eyes held venom as he glared at the speaker. Dolores suddenly raised her eyes from the binnacle, looked towards them as they crouched shivering in the lee of the deckhouse-companion, and she, warm and glowing in a garment whose every flimsy thread was saturated, laughed mockingly and called to them:

"I am forgetting what is due to my guests. Do you feel cold? Will you go below?"

And they, shivering and uneasy as they were, were content to shiver if only they might lose sight of her. Their reply was unintelligible; neither would look at the others; yet their mumbled response was understood, and the girl laughed again, loud, ringing, and full of alure.

"Such courage comes only of true sea stock, my friends! I shall not forget this fortitude, when I have done with the schooner."

"Flare close aboard!" roared Stumpy, then. "Seize my soul if I see the boat, tho, mistress. Satan! Now the flare's gone out!"

"Whereaway?" cried Dolores shrilly. Big Milo was out there in the blackness.

"Right under the bows!" bellowed the lookout. "Luff, or bear away; ye'll run him down!"

And from the raging seas off the lee-bow came the deep, calm voice of Milo, imperturbed as if on dry land, tho no boat was to be seen in the murk: "Hold the course, Sultana, I am here!"

And on the heels of the words came a flash from the skies, blazing full upon the dripping figure of the giant as he reached a great arm up, gripped the lee-rail, and swung himself on board with the unconscious ease of a perfect athlete

"Thy boat, Milo?" inquired Dolores.

"Sailed under, Sultana. I have held the flare aloft in my hand while swimming until a moment ago, when the powder burnt out."

"And Rufe?"

"The sloop is close by. Thou art sailing fair at his stern if thy course was not changed to avoid me. His topmast is gone; he sails slowly."

Then without more ado the splendid human animal clutched a backstay and swarmed aloft with the agility of an ape, showing not a whit of strain after his battle with the roaring sea. He reached Stumpy, sent that numbed mariner down, and searched the waters with his keen vision, waiting for another lightning flash. And when it came, fainter now as the thunderstorm receded, his resonant voice boomed down:

"Broad abeam the sloop lies! She runs before the wind!"

"Slack away the mainsheet!" cried Dolores, heaving the helm up. "Hail every minute, Milo!"

"Shall I send him a shot, lady?" roared Hanglip, at the schooner's foremost gun.

"Hold with thy shots, villain! Does Rufe deserve no sport? Stand by with the grappling hooks. I'll run him down!"

"The sloope is dead ahead!" hailed Milo, tho none on deck could detect anything of her in the blackness. Dolores listened intently. Then twirled the wheel, and cried: "I hear her! Ready the grapnels?"

"Aye, ready!"

"Then watch—and heave!" she commanded, and with the suddenness of light the schooner swept around in a swift arc, the black shape of the flying sloop stood out against the angry sea crests, and the two vessels came together with a crash of timber and rattling of gear.

A distant rumbling of thunder succeeded a faint flash, and wind and rain came down with increased fury as if to balance the defection of the electric ele-

(Continued on Page 19.)

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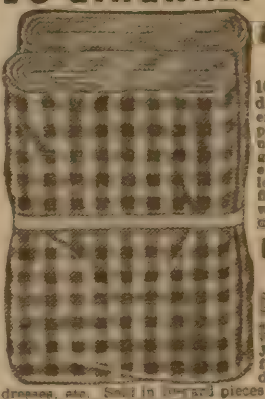

Delivered FREE

10 yards of splendid gingham at an exceptional bargain price. And you send no money. Pay when goods arrive. Then examine it at your leisure. If not satisfied for any reason, we will refund your money.

Dont Send a Penny

See what a bargain! Standard quality [illegible] and white check. [illegible] inches. Just what you want for aprons, children's dresses, house dresses, etc. Sold in [illegible] pieces only.

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We say this stunning blouse is absolutely without equal at our smashed price and we willingly send it for you to judge. Keep your money till blouse arrives—then pay only the bargain price and try it on in your home. Notice the elaborate embroidered design and if you are not convinced that you save at least half, send it back. We will cheerfully return your money.

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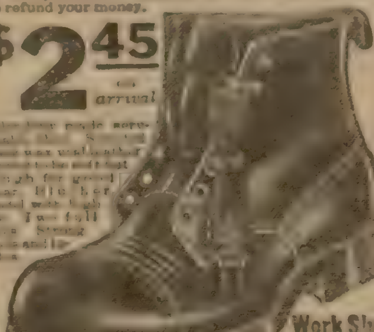

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When you are rundown, nervous, half sick, down-hearted and about ready to give up, experience of many years has shown that one of the best remedies to pull you out of this bad predicament is good old organic iron. But be sure the iron you take is organic iron, the kind that is found in plants, and not metallic iron which people usually take. Organic iron may be had from your druggist under the name of Nuxated Iron. It often increases the strength, energy and endurance of weak, nervous, tired out folks in two-weeks' time. Beware of substitutes. Always look for the word "Nuxated" on every package and the letters N. I. on every tablet. Sold by all druggists.

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You press the button, drop card in developer and in one minute take out a perfect finished post card photo 2½x3½ inches in size. Camera, itself, is about 4½x6x7 inches. Loads in daylight 16 to 50 post cards at one time.

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Tied With Green String

(Continued From Page 5)

clusion of his inspection he turned to Kelsey.

"This bird," he said contemptuously, flicking his thumb in Folwell's direction, "may have an alibi on the matter of the murder, but he's a self-confessed thief to the tune of five thousand one hundred dollars, at least, from this man Eaves. And his confession's been witnessed as well. If we don't get anything else out of this case, we'll see that the State's attorney sends him over the road, where he belongs, for grand larceny. Put the bracelets on him, Camera Eye, and take him over to headquarters and lock him up!"

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN THE UNIVERSE CRUMBLED.

FOLWELL stared at McIlroy, speechless, dumfounded.

"Do you mean to say," he stammered, "that you're going to take me into custody on the words of a dead man who——"

"Certainly do," snapped the detective bureau head gruffly, "and by the help of the State's attorney and this man's nearest heir at law, we'll run you over the road, where your kind belongs." He turned to Kelsey. "Put the cuffs on him and take him over to headquarters and lock him up." And he turned without further ado and fell to examining the body once more.

Folwell said but nine words. "Very well. Never mind the handcuffs. I'll go peaceably."

"I'll say you will," said Kelsey belligerently. "Come—let's go."

Folwell stripped off Eaves' coat, and resumed his own, which lay in the tiny closet across the room. He motioned to his back pocket, and clapped his own hat on his head.

"There's the gun Eaves gave me," he said in a low voice. "Take it, please."

Kelsey, withdrawing it, and running his hands in a pit-a-pat motion up and down Folwell's whole anatomy from his shoulders to the cuffs of his trousers to assure himself that no more weapons were present, slipped it into his own side pocket. Then, with a curt nod toward the door, he led the way from the offices. Once outside he proceeded in silence to the street, Folwell, very still, his mind working rapidly, however, following at his side. Now, indeed, he realized he was in a predicament. The paper which was never to see the light of any one's eyes other than Eaves' had now, thru the blow of the latter's assassin, the self-styled Star of the Night, been thrown into publicity; and how was he, Folwell, ever to explain why he had signed such a confession without, as before, bringing Avery Reardon's name into the painful notoriety. It was an ugly situation, and he wondered now what unkind fate had ever sent him strolling months before into the office of J. Hamilton Eaves, fresh from college and searching for a position.

But passing a drug store close to the city hall, Folwell turned to Kelsey.

"If I'm to be locked up, let alone booked on a charge of grand larceny," he pleaded, "let me call up a lawyer I know who has a connection with a bondsman, and who has known me since I was born. Will you do that?"

"Then do it quick," growled Kelsey, evidently anxious to get in the thick of things centering about the new sensation just sprung upon the police. "I'll be waiting on the outside of the booth, an' don't hold any long drawn-out love talks."

In the phone directory Folwell looked up the number of Walter Treadway, a man who had known his father before him. Treadway's offices were in the Reaper block, that great hive that houses thousands of lawyers, from well-paid corporation consultants to the little shysters who hang around police courts to earn their daily five-dollar fee. But to his consternation, Treadway proved to be out of town for the morning and not scheduled back in Chicago till late that afternoon. Already, with a sinking heart, he saw looming before him nothing less than a day spent inside stone walls. He sighed, and leaving a long message with Treadway's stenographer, hung up and rejoined the impatient Kelsey, who was stamping up and down in front of the booth.

Over they went to Central detective headquarters, with its offices standing near the mouth of the La Salle street tunnel, as tho waiting to pounce upon luckless criminals who might run from the gaping orifice of that ancient landmark. There he was searched completely and booked on a charge of grand larceny, the old white-haired detective sergeant back of the desk scrutinizing thru gold-rimmed spectacles both the confession Kelsey had brought along, and the man who had signed such a damning paper. After a long, protracted scratching of the pen across the red-ruled spaces in the wide book, Folwell was assigned to one of a series of a dozen or more very narrow cells placed along a corridor whose only illumination was that coming from the reflections of five sickly, yellow, old-fashioned bulbs against the whitewashed walls of the opposite side.

There he sat gloomily all morning, and at noontime was brought upstairs to McIlroy's office, the inner one of three large connecting rooms, where he spent a grueling half-hour with the old Scotchman, this time relating everything he knew about the threat against Eaves' life and the latter's ideas concerning the danger in which he stood, a group of reporters taking in the whole interview.

"And what was the price," put in McIlroy at one stage of the cross-questioning, "why you did all this for a man who only paid you the sum of thirty dollars per week?"

"That confession was promised back to me for the job," said Folwell truthfully. "A confession that shouldn't ever have been signed."

"And perhaps you signed it to protect some one else in the office?" said McIlroy. "Two of my men, Lyons and Cassidy, tell me they were called up there by Eaves right after he discovered his loss, a week ago yesterday, and that there was another employe that he suspected." His astute police mind was evidently scenting the one possibility that Folwell would not for the world have had come out.

The latter smiled wanly. Perhaps the time was not far distant when Avery Reardon's testimony in court about the telephone repair man, should Lionel Pettibone be persuaded to go ahead with this unwarranted prosecution, would cause a little surprise all around to the ever conviction-hungry police. And so he made no retort.

"There's nothing for me to say," he repeated stubbornly. "I'm waiting now for my lawyer to get back to Chicago, and in good time we'll try out the case in court if needs be. At any rate, not in a detective chief's private office."

McIlroy appeared unruffled by the thrust. He examined some papers on his desk. "So Eaves knew, when he received the cards with the three kings missing, did he, that Paddon, Rothblume and Lee were murdered?"

Folwell nodded. "Yes; by that fact plus the fact that Paddon, Rothblume and Lee had been named in the thirteen kings in the Riswold Magazine's expose."

"But Eaves also knew that he wasn't of the thirteen kings?"

"Yes," agreed Folwell. "That was precisely what puzzled him. If somebody was out to eliminate the men named in the Riswold article, why did they veer over to him?"

"You say he'd never been named in any newspaper write-up?" queried McIlroy.

"So he assured me when I asked the same question."

"Well, it's a strange situation," commented McIlroy perplexedly, partly in the direction of the reporters, "with the chief actors dead and buried, and their movements those nights all lost. Here on my desk is Dr. Thomas James' death certificate in the case of Johnstone Lee. Ptomaine poisoning are the words he has filled in, and like all the medics he is foxy enough to stand pat now, once having signed a statement to that effect. We find that he is a youngster—just out of college—called merely in an emergency—has a shingle out at Thirty-Third-street and Cottage Grove. 'Tis no telling what he knows about symptoms; and on the other hand he may be a good man at that work. We know Lee received a threat and a deck of cards. We know he ate downtown that night, according to Miss Annabelle Lee who just left here. And on the other hand the threat is destroyed and the cards are gone—at least she don't know where he put them. Now, if Lee was poisoned by intent even, where did he eat? And even did we have the cards, is there any clew in 'em?"

HE SHUFFLED over the papers grumpily. "And Paddon. How was Paddon murdered? How are we to draw any conclusions about a man that skids over the Madison street draw on a rainy night in August? This is all we know about Paddon.

"Rothblume? The cards again, all right, but not a one left to work upon. The ambulance surgeon who picked him up at the edge of Tower Square called it apoplexy. 'Tis nary an ambulance surgeon that knows beans, I have always found. You've just heard the testimony of Miss Leah Rothblume and Mrs. Rose Rothblume in this office. They know nothing about his movements that night of Aug. 21 beyond the fact that he phoned at 6 o'clock saying he would be home at 10. He was found lying near the edge of Tower Square—three hundred feet away from some property he owned, and it's supposed he walked over to that district after he had cleaned up some details at his office, to look it over. Was he followed? Who followed him? And are we to dig up these bodies at this date to analyze their stomachs and examine their skulls?" He shook his stocky head and relapsed, almost unconsciously it seemed, into his Scotch accent. "Gentlemen, I think our only chance to land this killer is on the Eaves case alone. Do we fail there, then do we fail on four murders instead of one."

"But the deck of cards and the threat that Eaves himself received," put in one of the younger reporters, evidently wrapped up in McIlroy's exposition of the importance of the present case in uncovering the three deaths which had preceded that of Eaves. "How about them?"

McIlroy turned to Folwell. "You say he claimed to you that he sealed up both the threat and the cards and locked them in the vault. Now that he's changed the combination, what's the chances of getting into the vault? The lad—his stepson—knows nothing about it."

Folwell shrugged his shoulders. "According to what he has told me of that vault, nobody could open the two doors without the combination. Dynamite or drilling, I guess, is the only way left now."

"I see," McIlroy thought for a moment. "Now, my man, understand your skirts are clean on the matter of Eaves' death—the lad says you were in the house all evening. But on this theft you can answer the law." He stared curiously at Folwell. "Don't suppose you ever dreamed your employer would give you accidentally away, eh?"

"I certainly never dreamed that what did happen ever would happen," admitted the younger man guardedly. He wrinkled his brows. "What does Lionel Pettibone, his stepson, say about my arrest?"

"The lad agreed to prosecute you to the limit, but he happens to have too much on his mind just now to discuss such things fully," said McIlroy curtly. He turned to the reporters. "Well, boys, let's crystallize and unify our theories on this affair and be done with it." He nodded to the blue uniformed guard who had brought Folwell up. "Take him downstairs."

On the way down, thru the worn corridors of the building, Folwell passed a newsboy. Groping in his pocket he succeeded in finding two pennies in a small-change pocket which had been overlooked when he was searched. He lost no time in buying a noonday paper. This he took to his cell.

The whole story of the murder was there, replete with photographs. It showed, Eaves sitting in his swivel-chair, and told of the condition of the office. It gave diagrams of every doorway, floor and window in the suite. It told also of Apple Mary Battersbee, the old English woman who kept the fruit and magazine stand in the foyer of the Temple. Apple Mary had been sitting back of her stand all evening, to make the customary sales to clerks who were forced to work late in their offices. She testified that she had seen J. Hamilton Eaves leave for home at 7 o'clock, his face done up in surgical gauze. Folwell remembered how she had stared and nodded to him, as he passed at that hour. Continuing with Apple Mary's testimony, she had seen dozens of familiar faces passing in and out up until around 8 o'clock, when the one elevator running late stopped for the night. Traffic thru the doors had died down at about that hour. She remembered one man, whom she could not recall ever having seen before, pass into the foyer somewhere between 8:30 and 9:30, and later pass out again. She didn't seem to recall the exact time. She was looking at the pictures in a copy of Ally Sloper's London Weekly. She could not describe the stranger very well. No, he wasn't tall, nor was he short. He wasn't blond and he wasn't brunette. The age—she couldn't guess. She was certain she would know him in an instant if she saw him again. He was dressed in a raincoat.

But, to Folwell's consternation, he found not only the entire letter taken from the dictatograph, photographed and reproduced in halftone, but interpreted and translated as well, giving his involvement in Eaves' affairs; worse still, his own confession, signed and witnessed, reproduced in the same layout. and finally his photograph, which had been taken from his room by some enterprising reporter who had evidently gotten past his landlady, old Mrs. Peters, with her silver-bowed spectacles.

He crumpled up the paper fiercely and sat staring downward for a long time, his face burning in his hands. In the eyes of 2,700,000 Chicagoans, let alone every suburb around the great Middle West metropolis, he stood branded a self-confessed thief. What a horrible, horrible mess it was. Why in Heaven's name had he ever allowed himself to be drawn into such things? But the mental picture of Avery Reardon, and her tender big black eyes, made him suddenly straighten up and thrust forward his lower jaw with a determined jerk. After all, he had done it for her, and he

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would do it all over again. And it was she, in turn, he felt sure, who was to savo him from any too serious results when the case actually came to trial, by her unshakable and highly significant story of the telephone repairman she had caught fumbling at the outer dial of Eaves' vault.

Thus he sat all afternoon, at times pacing up and down, and at times sitting disconsolately on the hard wood bench. And at last came Walter Treadway, Walter Treadway himself, well groomed, gray sideburns, brown tailored suit and brown derby, gray gloves and cane.

Folwell's alibi in the murder case will undoubtedly hold good, as Inspector McIlroy has already assured him; but how to prove his innocence of the safe robbery—with his signed confession of guilt standing against him, and at the same time shield Miss Reardon from suspicion, is another and most serious matter. Perhaps his lawyer, Walter Treadway, will find a way. We shall see. Part four next week. Don't miss it.

The Strange Case of Cavendish

(Continued From Page 9)

had brought her there, for Sikes, plainly enough, was a mere drunken brute, and Moore, while of somewhat finer fibre, lacked the courage and manhood to ever develop into a true friend.

Yet she would have infinitely preferred such as these—men, at least, of her own race—to this smirking Mexican, hiding his devilish instincts behind a pretense at gallantry. She knew him, now, understood him, felt convinced, indeed, that this was all some cunning scheme originating within his own brain. He had hastened ahead to Mendez; told a tale in his own way, rendering the chief's suspicions of Lacy more acute, and thus gaining permission to asume full charge. Her only hope was to go herself into the presence of the leader, and make a plea to him face to face. Moore was already at the horses' heads, and was turning them about in the trail. Cateras, smiling, pressed her arm with his fingers.

"This way, senorita."

"Wait," and her eyes met his, showing no sign of fear. "You take me, I presume, to Senor Mendez?"

"Of what need?" in surprise. "He has already placed me in charge."

"Yet without hearing a word as to why I am here," indignantly. "I am an American woman, and you will yet pay dearly for this outrage. I demand an interview with the chief, and refuse to go with you until it is granted."

"You refuse! Ha!" And he burst into laughter. "Why, what power have you got, you little fool? Do you know where you are? What fear do we have of your d—n Americanos. None!" and he snapped his fingers derisively. "We spit on the dogs. I will show you—come!"

He gripped her shoulder in his lean hand, his eyes glaring into her face savagely. The grasp hurt, and a sudden anger spurred her to action. With a quick twist she freed herself, and, scarcely knowing how it was done, snatched the heavy driver's whip from Moore's hand. The next instant, before the astounded Mexican could even throw up an arm in defense, the infuriated girl struck, the stinging lash raising a red welt across the swarthy cheek. Cateras staggered back, his lip giving utterance to a curse.

Again she struck, but this time his fingers gripped the leather, and tore it from her hands, with sufficient force to send her to her knees. With a spring forward the man had her in his grasp, all tiger now, the pretense at gentleness forgotten. He jerked her to her feet, with fingers clutching her neck mercilessly.

"Here, Silva, Merodez," he cried, "come take this spitfire. Carambia! We'll teach her."

Two men ran from between the huts and Cateras flung her, helpless from her choking, into their grasp.

"Take her within—no, there; the second door, you fools."

Breathless from effort, a mere child in their grip, Miss Donovan struggled vainly. They forced her thru the door, and Cateras, still cursing furiously, followed, the whip in his hands.

CHAPTER XIX.

WESTCOTT FINDS HIMSELF ALONE.

IT NEVER occurred to Westcott on his escape thru the darkness that his night's adventure would in any way endanger Miss Donovan. He was on the property of La Rosita Mining Company upon his own account, and not in reference to the Cavendish case at all—or, at least, this last was merely incidental.

To be sure he had listened to a confession from Enright bearing directly upon the affair in New York, a confession so strange he could scarcely grasp its true meaning. But this never brought to his mind the thought that suspicion already rested upon the girl's presence in Haskell. His whole interest centered for the moment on Lacy's daring attempt to break thru the wall of rock below and lay claim to his lead of ore. Not until this effort had been abandoned would he dare to desert his mine—and even then safety could be assured only by the establishment of an armed guard in the tunnel prepared to repel any invasion.

While undoubtedly the mining law of the State would eventually sustain his claim, yet the fact that he had for so long kept his discovery secret would seriously operate against him; while if Lacy's gang once acquired actual possession of the property, the only way of proving prior ownership would be thru an official survey and long protracted proceedings in court.

Here he would be at great disadvantage because of lack of money and influence. In this respect Westcott realized fully what he was up against, for while it was quietly known that Lacy was a questionable character, his name associated with the leadership of a desperate gang, yet his wealth and power rendered him a decidedly dangerous opponent. As proprietor of the biggest saloon, dance hall, and gambling den in Haskell, he wielded an influence not to be ignored—especially as the sheriff of the county was directly indebted to him for his office. A dangerous man himself, with the reputation of a killer, he had about him others capable of any crime to carry out his orders, confident that his wealth and influence would assure their safety. To such as he was stealing of a mine was a mere incident.

This was the situation confronting Westcott as he crouched behind a rock on the black hillside, endeavoring to decide upon a course of action. The events of the last few hours had almost entirely forced aside memory of the girl at the hotel—and her mission. He was fighting now for his own life, his own future—and fighting alone. The blade of Moore's knife had slashed his forearm in the early moments of their fierce struggle, and blood was trickling down his wrist, yet not in sufficient quantity to give him any great concern. Once beyond the probability of pursuit, he turned up his sleeve and made some effort to minister to the gash, satisfying himself quickly that it was of trivial nature.

From where he lay he could see across the bare, rock-strewn hillside to the distant hut, outlined by the gleam of light within, and perceive the black silhouette of the shaft-house. The sound of clanking machinery reached his ears, but the voices of the men failed to carry so far. He could dimly distinguish their figures as they passed in and out of the glare of light, and was aware that Moore had been found and carried within the hut, but remained ignorant of the fact that the leaving of a knife in the window had revealed his identity. There was no attempt at pursuit, which gave him confidence that Lacy failed to comprehend the importance of what had been overheard, yet he clung closely to his hiding-place until all the men had reentered the office.

However, he was too wary to approach the window again, fearing some trap, but crept cautiously along the slope of the hill thru the black shadows until he attained safe shelter close in against the dump. His hope was that Enright's arguments would induce Lacy to discontinue operations for the present and thus give him time in which to prepare for resistance. In this he was not disappointed. What took place within the office could only be guessed at, but in less than half an hour a man emerged from the open door and hailed the fellows at work in the shaft-house. The messenger stood in the full glare of light, revealing to the silent watcher the face and figure of Moore, convincing evidence that this worthy had not been seriously injured during the late encounter.

"Hey, Tom!" he shouted.

The lantern above was waved out over the edge of the timbered platform and a deep voice responded.

"Well, what'che want?"

"Send word down to the boys to come up. They're laid off fer a while, an' their pay's ready for 'em."

"Lay 'em off! Who says so?"

"Lacy, of course; hustle them out now—them's the orders."

"Well, that beats hell!" But the lantern vanished as he went grumbling back to his engine.

They came up, talking excitedly among themselves, stumbled down the rough path, and filed into the open door of the lighted office. There were twenty of them, according to Westcott's count, and the interview within must have been satisfactory as they departed quietly enough, disappearing down the trail toward Haskell. Moore remained outside, apparently checking the fellows off as they passed, and when the last one vanished again hailed the shaft-house:

"What's the matter with you, Tom? Why don't you close down and come and get your stuff?"

"You want me, too?"

"Sure—we're here waitin' fer yer."

Westcott clung to his hiding-place, but greatly relieved in mind. This unexpected action had postponed his struggle and left him free to plan for defense. For the first time almost his brain grasped the full significance of this movement, its direct connection with the disappearance of Frederick Cavendish, and the presence of Stella Donovan. Enright had suggested and urged the closing down of the mine temporarily to avoid unnecessary publicity—to throw Westcott off the trail. His argument must have been a powerful one to thus influence Lacy—nothing less than a pledge of money could cause the latter to forego immediate profit.

Undoubtedly the lawyer had convinced the man of the certainty of their gaining possession of the Cavendish fortune, and had offered him a goodly share for his assistance. Then the plan was at a head—if Cavendish was not dead he was safely in their hands, where his death could be easily accomplished, if other means failed.

This was to be Lacy's part of the bargain, and he was already too deeply involved in the hellish conspiracy to withdraw. Enright, with his lawyer-astuteness, had seen to that—had even got this Western gambler securely into his grip and put on the screws. The miner, realizing now the full situation, or at least, imagining that he did, smiled grimly and waited in his covert on the hillside for the conspirators to make their next move.

He dare not approach the cabin any closer, or permit his presence to become known, for Moore was kept outside the door on guard. However, the delay was not a long one, horses being brought up from the nearby corral, and the entire party mounting rode down the trail toward Haskell. The cabin was left dark and deserted, the mine silent. Westcott made no effort to follow, feeling assured that no important movement would be attempted that night.

IT WAS late the next morning before he rode into Haskell and, stabling his horse, which bore all the marks of hard riding, proceeded toward the Timmons House. He had utilized, as best he could, the hours since that cavalcade had departed from La Rosita to put his own affairs in order so that he might feel free to camp on the conspirators' trail and risk all in an effort to rescue Cavendish. The night had been a hard one, but Westcott was still totally unconscious of fatigue—his whole thought centered on his purpose.

Alone he had explored the tunnels in Lacy's mine, creeping about in the darkness, guided only by the flash of an electric torch, until he thoroly understood the nature of the work being accomplished. As soon as dawn came he sought two reliable men in the valley below, and posted them as guards over

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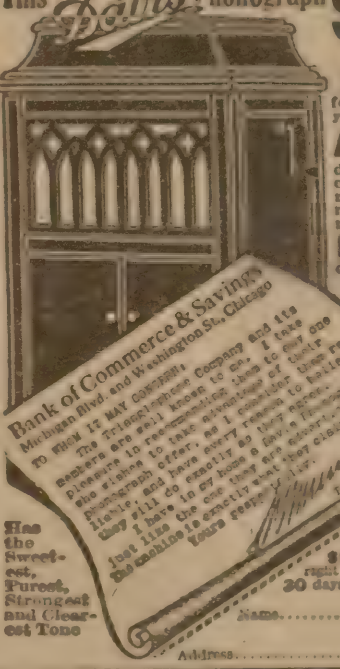

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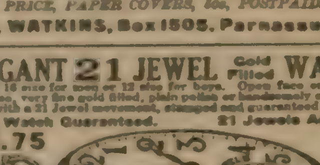
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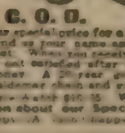
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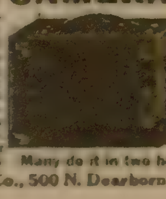

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his own property; but, before he finally rode away, the three brought forth the body of the murdered Mexican and reverently buried it on a secluded spot of the bleak hillside.

Then, convinced that every precaution had been taken, Westcott turned his horse's head toward Haskell. As he rode slowly up the street in the bright sunlight his mind reverted to Stella Donovan. The stern adventures of the night had temporarily driven the girl from his thoughts, but now the memory returned, and her bright, womanly face arose before him, full of allurement. He seemed to look once more into the wonderful depths of her eyes and to feel the fascination of her smile. Eager for the greeting, which he felt assured awaited him, he strode thru the open door into the office. The room was vacant, but as he crossed the floor toward the desk the proprietor entered thru the opening leading into the barroom beyond. Timmons had quite evidently been drinking more than usual—the effect being largely disclosed by loquacity of speech.

"Hello, Jim!" he cried at sight of the other. "Thought you'd be back, but, d—n it, yer too late—she's—she's gone; almighty pretty girl, too. I told the boys it was a blame shame fer her ter run off thataway."

"Who has run off?" And Westcott's hand crushed down on the man's shoulder with a force that half-sobered him. "What are you talking about?"

"Me! Let up, will yer? Yer was here hopin' ter see that New York girl, wasn't yer?"

"Miss Donovan? Yes."

"I'd forgot her name. Well, she ain't yere—she's left."

"Left—gone from town?"

"Sure; skipped out sudden in the night; took the late train East, I reckon. Never sed no word to nobody—just naturally packed up her duds an' hiked."

Westcott drew a deep breath.

"Surely you do not mean she left without any explanation? She must have paid her bill."

"Oh, she was square enough—sure. She left money an' a note pinned to her pillow; sed she'd just got a message callin' her back home—want ter see whut she wrote?"

"You bet I do, Timmons! Have you got the note here?"

Timmons waddled around behind the desk and ran his hand into a drawer. Evidently he considered the matter a huge joke, but Westcott snatched the paper from his fingers impatiently and eagerly read the few hastily penciled lines:

> Have received a message calling me East at once. Shall take the night train, and inclose sufficient money to pay for my entertainment.
> S. D.

He stared at the words, a deep crease between his eyes. It was a woman's handwriting, and at first glance there was nothing impossible in such an action on her part. Yet it was strange, if she had departed so suddenly, without leaving any message for him. After that meeting at the bridge, and the understanding between them, it didn't seem to Westcott at all probable that she would thus desert without some plausible explanation. His eyes narrowed with aroused suspicion as he looked up from the slip of paper and confronted the amused Timmons across the desk.

"I'll keep this," he said soberly, folding it and thrusting it into his pocket.

"All right"—and Timmons smiled blandly—"I got the money."

"And that was all, was it—just this note and the cash? There was nothing addressed to me?"

The hotel-keeper shook his head.

"When did you see her last?"

"'Bout 9 o'clock, I reckon; she come down inter the dinin'-room fer a drink o' water."

"She said nothing then about going away?"

"She didn't speak to nobody—just got a swig an' went upstairs agin."

"How much longer were you up?"

"Oh, maybe an hour; there was some boys playin' poker here an' I waited round till they quit."

"No message for Miss Donovan up to that time?"

"No."

"You left the door unlocked?"

"Sure; them New York fellers was both out. I oughter waited till they come in, maybe, but I was plum' tired out."

"When did they come back?"

"Oh, 'bout midnight, I reckon. Bill Lacy an' Matt Moore was along with 'em. They didn't disturb me none; just went inter the sample-room, an' slept on the floor. I found 'em thar in the mornin', and Bill told me how they come to be thar—leastwise 'bout himself, fer Moore had got up an' gone afore I got down."

"I see! And these New York people—they are still here?"

"They wus all three down ter breakfast; ain't seen nuthin' of 'em since; I reckon they're upstairs somewhar."

"What became of Lacy?"

"He's down in his saloon; he sed if you showed up, an' asked fer him, ter tell yer that's whar he'd be."

"He told you that? He expected to show up then?"

"I reckon as how he did," and Timmons grinned in drunken good humor. "He's pretty blame smart, Bill Lacy is; he most allars knows whut's goin' ter happen." He leaned over his desk and lowered his voice. "If yer do hunt him up, Jim," he said confidentially, "you better go heeled."

Westcott laughed. The first shock of the discovery of Miss Donovan's disappearance had passed, and he was himself again. He must have time to think and arrange some plan and above all, must retain a clear mind and proceed coolly.

"All right, old man," he said easily. "I'll try and look out for myself. I haven't eaten yet today. What can you find for me in the larder?"

CHAPTER XX.

TO COMPEL AN ANSWER.

ALTHO feeling the need of food, Westcott entered the dining-room of the Timmons House more desirous of being alone than for any other purpose. He realized that he was suddenly brought face to face with a most serious condition, and one which must be solved unaided. He dare not venture upon a single step forward until he had first thought out carefully the entire course to be followed. Two lives, and perhaps three, including his own, were now in imminent peril, and any mistake on his part would prove most disastrous. First of all he must keep his own counsel. Not even the half-drunken Timmons could be allowed to suspect the real depth of his interest in this affair.

Fortunately, it was so late in the morning he was left undisturbed at a side table, screened from the open door leading into the office. Sadie, the waitress, took his order and immediately disappeared, leaving him to his own thoughts. These were far from happy ones, as his mind rapidly reviewed the situation and endeavored to concentrate upon some practical plan of action.

So Bill Lacy expected him? Had left word where he was to be found? What was the probable meaning of this? Westcott did not connect this message directly with the strange disappearance of Miss Donovan. Whether or not Lacy was concerned in that outrage had nothing to do with this, for the man could scarcely be aware of his deep interest in the girl. No, this must be his own personal affair, complicated by the case of Cavendish. Moore must have recognized him during their fight, and reported to his master who it was that had been discovered listening at the window. Realizing the nature of that conversation, Lacy naturally anticipated being sought the very moment Westcott came to town. That was what this meant. All right, he would hunt Lacy as soon as he was ready to do so; and, as Timmons suggested, would go "heeled."

But the girl? What had really become of the girl? There was no way of proving she had not gone East, for there was no agent at the station at that hour, and the night train could be halted by any one waving a signal light. Westcott drew the brief note from his pocket, smoothed out its creases and read the few words over again. The writing was unquestionably feminine, but having lost the only specimens of Miss Donovan's writing he had ever seen he had nothing with which to make a comparison. But would she have departed, however, hurriedly, without leaving him some message? To be sure there had been little enough between them of intimacy or understanding; nothing he could really construe into a promise—yet he had given her complete trust, and had felt a friendly response. He could not compel himself to believe she would prove unfaithful. Unconsciously he still held the letter in his hand when the waitress came in with his breakfast. She glanced about to make certain they were alone and leaned over, her lips close to his ear.

"Is that the note they say that New York young lady left?"

"Yes, Sadie," in surprise. "Why?"

"Well, she never wrote it, Mr. Westcott," hurriedly placing the dishes before him, "that's all. Now don't yer say a word to anybody that I told yer; but she didn't go East at all; she wus took in a wagon down the desert road. I saw 'em take her."

"You saw them? Who?"

"Well, I don't just know that, 'cept it was Matt Moore's team, an' he wus drivin' it. I didn't see the others so es to be sure. Yer see us help sleep over the kitchen, an' bout 1 o'clock I woke up—here comes Timmons; he mustn't see me talkin' ter yer."

She flicked her napkin over the table, picked up an emptied dish and vanished thru the swinging-doors. Timmons, however, merely came in searching for the Chinaman, and, not finding the latter immediately, retired again to the office, without even addressing his guest, who was busily eating. Sadie peered in once more, and, seeing all was clear, crossed over beside Westcott.

"Well, as I was sayin'," she resumed. "I thought I heard a noise outside, an' got up an' went to the winder. I couldn't see much, not 'nough so I could swear to nuthin'; but there was three or four men out there just across that little gully, you know, an' they had a woman with 'em. She didn't scream none, but she was tryin' ter git away; wunst she run, but they caught her. I didn't see no wagon then, it was behind the ridge, I reckon. After a while it drove off down the south trail, an' a little later three men come up them outside stairs back into the hotel. They was mighty still 'bout it, too."

"You couldn't tell who they were?"

"They wa'n't like nuthin' but shadders; it was a purty dark night."

"So it was, Sadie. Do you imagine Timmons had anything to do with the affair?"

"Timmons? Not him. There wa'nt no figure like him in that bunch; I'd know him in the dark."

"But the woman might not have been Miss Donovan; isn't there another young lady here from the East?"

Sadie tossed her head, but with her eyes cautiously fixed on the office door.

"Humph; you mean the peroxide blonde! She ain't no lady. Well, it wa'n't her, that's a cinch; she was down yere to breakfast, a-laughin' an' gigglin' with them two men 'bout an hour ago. They seemed ter feel mighty good over somethin', but I couldn't quite make out just what the joke was. Say, did yer ever hear tell of a Mexican named Mendez?"

"Well, rather; he's a cattle thief, or worse. Arizona has a big reward out for him, dead or alive."

"That's the gink, I bet yer; has he got a hang-out anywhar 'round this country?"

"Not so far as I know; in fact, I haven't heard the fellow's name mentioned for six months, or more. What makes you suspect this?"

Sadie leaned even closer, her voice trembling with excitement, evidently convinced that her information was of the utmost importance.

"For God's sake, Mr. Westcott," she whispered, "don't never tell anybody I told yer, but she was awful good ter me, an' that pasty-faced blonde makes me sick just ter look at her. You know the feller they call Enright, I reckon he's a lawyer."

Westcott nodded.

"Well, he was doin' most of the talkin', an' I was foolin' round the sideboard yonder, pretendin' ter clean it up. Nobody thought I was in ear distance, but I got hold ov a word now an' then. He kept tellin' em, 'specially the blonde, 'bout this Mexican, who's a friend of Bill Lacy, an' I judge has a place whar he hangs out with his gang somewhar in the big desert."

"Was anything said about Miss Donovan?"

"Not by name; they was too smart for that; but that was the direction Matt Moore drove off last night—there's Enright comin' downstairs now; won't yer hav' some more cakes, sir?"

Westcott pushed back his chair and rose to his feet. He had extracted all the information the girl possessed, and had no wish to expose her to suspicion. There was no longer a doubt in his mind as to the fate of Miss Donovan. She had been forcibly abducted by this gang of thieves, and put where her knowledge could do them no harm. But where? The clew had been given him, but before it could be of any value he must learn more of this Mexican, Mendez. The name itself was familiar enough, for it was one often spoken along the border in connection with crime, but beyond this meant nothing to him. The fellow had always appeared a rather mythical character, but now became suddenly real. The marshal might know; if not, then he must choke the truth out of Lacy. Determined to make the effort, he muttered a swift word of thanks to Sadie and left the room.

ENRIGHT was not in the office, but had evidently merely passed thru and gone out. Timmons was sound asleep in a chair by the window, oblivious to any ordinary noise. From the open doorway Westcott took careful survey of the street, adjusting his belt so that the butt of his revolver was more convenient to the hand. He had no conception that his coming interview with Lacy was to be altogether a pleasant one, and realized fully the danger confronting him.

Very few of the citizens of Haskell were abroad, altho a small group were ornamenting the platform in front of Healey's saloon opposite. At that moment the little marshal, his broad-brimmed hat cocked over one eye, emerged from the narrow alleyway between the Red Dog and the adjacent dance hall, and stood there doubtfully, his gaze wandering up and down the deserted street. As Westcott descended the hotel steps, the marshal saw him, and came forward. His manner was prompt and businesslike.

"Hello, Jim," he said rather briskly, "I was sorter lookin' 'round fer yer; somebody said yer hoss was up at the stable. Had a little trouble up your way last night, I hear."

"Nothing to bother you, Dan; my Mexican watchman was shot up thru a window of the shack."

"Kill him?"

"Instantly; I told the coroner all about it. Whoever the fellow was I reckon he meant the shot for me, but poor Jose got it."

"Yer didn't glimpse the critter?"

"No, it was long after dark. I've got my suspicions, but they'll keep. Seen Bill Lacy this morning?"

The marshal's thin lips smiled grimly as his eyes lifted to Westcott's face.

"He's back there in his office. That's what I stopped yer for. He said he rather expected ye'd be along after a while. What's up between yer, Jim? Not this Mexican shootin' scrape?"

"Not unless he mentions it, Dan, altho I reckon he might be able to guess how it happened. Just now I've got some other things to talk about—he's cutting into my vein."

"The hell he is!"

"Sure; I got proof of it last night. He's running a cross channel. I was down his shaft."

"I heard he's knocked off work; discharged his men."

"Yes, but only to give him time in which to pull off some other deviltry. That gave me opportunity to learn just what was being done. I slipped into the workings after the gang had left, and now I've blocked his game. Say, Dan, what do you know about that Mexican, Mendez?"

"Nuthin' good. I never put eyes on the fellow. Some claim he's got a place where he hides, out thar in the Shoshone desert, but I never got hold of anybody yet as really knew."

"There is such a man, then?"

"Sure. Why he an' his gang had a pitched battle down on Rattlesnake 'bout six months ago; killed three of the sheriff's posse, an' got away. Seemed like the whole outfit naturally dropped inter the earth. Never saw hide ner hair of 'em afterward."

"I've heard that he and Bill Lacy were in cahoots."

"Likely enough; ain't much Lacy ain't into. He's been sellin' a pile of cattle over at Taylorsville lately, an' likely most of 'em was stole. But hell! What can I do? Besides, that's the sheriff's job, ain't it? What yer goin' in to see him about, Jim?"

"Only to ask a few questions."

"There ain't goin' ter be no fight er nuthin'?" anxiously.

Westcott laughed.

"I don't see any cause for any," he answered. "But Bill might be a bit touchy. Maybe, Dan, it might be worth while for you to hang around. Do as you please about that."

He turned away and went up the wooden steps to the door of the Red Dog. The marshal's eyes followed him solicitously until he disappeared within; then he slipped back into the alleyway, skirting the side of the building, until he reached a window near the rear.

Westcott closed the door behind him and took a swift view of the barroom. There were not many present at that hour—only a few habitual loafers, mostly playing cards; a porter was sweeping up sawdust and a single bartender was industriously swabbing the bar with a towel. Westcott recognized most of the faces with a slight feeling of relief. Neither Enright nor Beaton were present, and it was his desire to meet Lacy alone, away from the influence of these others. He crossed over to the bar.

"Where's Bill?" he asked.

"Back there," and the dispenser of drinks inclined his head toward a doar at the rear. "Go on in."

The fellow's manner was civil enough, yet Westcott's teeth set with a feeling that he was about to face an emergency. Yet there was no other way; he must make Lacy talk. He walked straight to the door, opened it, stepped into the room beyond, and turned the key in the lock, dropping it into his pocket. Then he faced about. He was not alone with Lacy; Enright sat beside the desk of the other and was staring at him in startled surprise. Westcott also had a hazy impression that there was or had been another person. The saloon-keeper rose to his feet, angry, and thrown completely off his guard by Westcott's unexpected action.

"What the hell does that mean?" he demanded hotly. "Why did you lock the door?"

"Naturally, to keep you in here until I am thru with you," returned the miner coldly. "Sit down, Lacy; we've got a few things to talk over. You left word for me at the hotel, and, being a polite man, I accepted your invitation. I supposed I would find you alone."

Lacy sank back into his chair, endeavoring to smile.

"This gentleman is a friend of mine," he explained. "Whatever you care to say can be said before him."

"I am quite well aware of that and also that he is now present so that you may use him as a witness in case anything goes wrong. This is once you have got in bad, Mr. Patrick Enright, of New York."

The lawyer's face whitened, and his hands gripped the arms of his chair.

"You—you know me?"

"By reputation only," and Westcott bowed, "but that is scarcely to your credit. I know this, however, that for various reasons you possess no desire to advertise your presence in Haskell. It would be rather a difficult matter to explain back in the city just what you were doing out here in such intimate association with a chorus girl and a Bowery gunman, let alone our immaculate friend, Lacy, yonder. The courts, I believe, have not yet distributed the Cavendish money."

Enright's mouth was open, but no sound came from his lips; he seemed to be gasping for breath.

"I merely mention this," went on Westcott slowly, "to help you grasp the situation. We have a rough, rude way of handling such matters out here. Now, Lacy and I have got a little affair to settle between us and, being a fair-minded man, he sent for me to talk it over. However, he realizes that an argument of that nature might easily become personal and that if anything unpleasant occurred he would require a witness. So he arranges to have you present. Do you see the point, Mr. Enright?"

The lawyer's eyes sought Lacy, and then returned to the stern face confronting him. His lips sputtered:

"As—as a witness?"

"Sure; there may be honor among thieves, but not Lacy's kind." He strode forward and with one hand crunched Enright back into his chair. "Now, listen to me," he said fiercely. "I've got only one word of advice for you; don't take any hand in this affair, except as a peacemaker, for if you do, you are going to get hurt. Now, Bill Lacy, I'm ready to talk with you. I was down in your shaft last night."

The saloon-man lit a cigar and leaned back in his chair.

"I ought to have thought of that, Westcott," he admitted. "Still, I don't know that I give a d—n."

"The work hadn't been left in very good shape, and I found the cross tunnel and measured it. You are within a few feet of my vein. The county surveyor ought to have been out there two hours ago."

Lacy straightened up, all semblance of indifference gone, an oath on his lips.

"You cur! You filed complaint? When?"

"At 7 o'clock this morning. We'll fight that out in the courts. However, that isn't what I came here for at all. I came to ask you a question and one of you two are going to answer before I leave—keep your hands up, and in sight, Lacy; make another move like that and it's liable to be your last. I am not here in any playful mood, and I know your style. Lay that gun on the desk where I can see it—that's right. Now, move your chair back."

Lacy did this with no good grace, his face purple with passion. Westcott had been too quick, too thoroly prepared for him, but he would watch his opportunity. He could afford to wait, knowing the cards he had up his sleeve.

"Some considerable gun-play just to ask a question," he said tauntingly, "must be mighty important. All right, what is it?"

"Where did your man Moore take Miss Donovan last night?"

Just what reply Jim got to his accusative question is problematical at just this point in the story. Lacy will probably try to "beat around the bush," but without avail, and the next installment may take our plucky hero up into the bad lands bent on rescuing the courageous heroine. Another big chunk of the story in next week's Ledger.

* * *

Framing His New Act.

VAUDEVILLE artists lead a severely competitive existence. On every stage that presents variety entertainments the battle for supremacy is being waged.

If the Aerial Ryans get word that the Flying Schultzes are offering one more somesault than they, the Aerial Ryans rest not until they have added the extra turnover to their act, with perhaps another twister as an added attraction. If Mix and Dix, dancers de luxe, learn that Bib and Dib, terpsichorean whirlwinds, have added a new and difficult step to their routine, young Mr. Mix and his partner will forego all pleasures until they have, in their opinion, exceeded the rival duo.

No wonder then that Art Higgs, the human frog, registered surprise and consternation when Mazie Little, doing a single on the bill, told him that Jack Ardell, who has the unprecedented effrontery to bill himself as "the frolicsome frog" and is Higgs' only rival, was doing a new act that was gaining much praise.

"What has he got that yours truly hasn't?" Higgs questioned Mazie.

"Well," returned Mazie, "Jack has a wonderful setting. And, while I always liked your act better than any other frog in the business, I had to hand something to Jack. His effect at the opening is great."

"What about my morning effect?" countered Higgs. "Haven't I got in the bird calls and the buzzing of the insects and everything?"

"But he does a piece of business hopping from one toadstool to another that goes big," said Mazie.

"Haven't I got four toadstools in my act? Isn't my broad jump at the close a sure fire?"

"Then he has some laughs in his act, too," continued Mazie. "He makes a noise like a bullfrog that's a scream. He knocks 'em off their seats with it, honest to goodness!"

"I had a frog croak in my act and I took it out," said Higgs. "The first frog act did that forty years ago."

"But next month! He's got a big idea for that. He'll get the big time right off the reel. He is going to add a lady to the offering. When the act opens with the dawn the lady, who will be dressed like a bluebird, will sing numbers while he does his contortions behind her. At the finish she sees the frog and is about to fly into a tree. When he pulls off the mask they recognize each other and go into a duet for a closer. He wants me for the bluebird, Art."

Art Higgs was breathing hard and thinking harder. Jack Ardell was bidding fair to lead all other frog acts by grace of his novelty—a girl bluebird warbling in the sunrise scene.

"Mazie," Higgs ventured, "if you came on in my act as a bird of paradise, with your voice and your appearance, we'd have a big-time act right now. That is, of course, if you think I'm as good a frog act as Jack Ardell."

"I'll join you," said Mazie. "You're a better frog than he is, Ghunga Din."

* * *

Bridal Pairs Shun Friday.

MARRIAGE bureau clerks and others who work at the office where marriage licenses are obtained say the number of couples who apply for a life contract varies with the weather, a bright sun and warm air bringing out many more than apply on dark or rainy day, says a New York paper

During Lent the number of applications dwindles to the lowest point in the year, but the week after Easter sees a revival.

There is a lack of activity in the bureau every Friday, but Saturday brings out throngs of requests. The rush on Monday and Thursday is greater than on any other day but Saturday

June is traditionally the bridal month. The midsummer and midwinter months are not nearly as popular.

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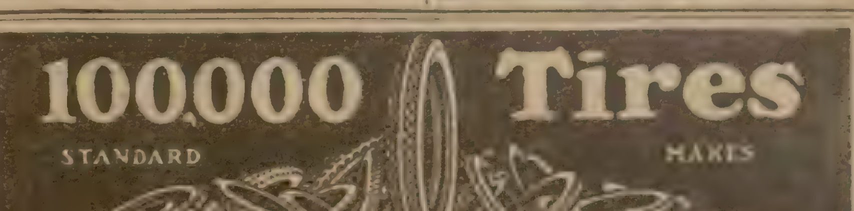

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United Looters, Inc.

(Continued From Page 6)

scornful smile curled her lips. With a pretty gesture she thrust the instrument into my hands.

"All right," she whispered and there was a note of admiration in her voice. "Let's see you get out of this—before you—make love!"

I tried to get her to meet my smile, but she shrugged her shoulders and leaned back in her chair. I rumbled the customary greeting into the telephone.

"Say, are you the North that works for the Metropolitan Bank?" came in a harsh excited voice.

"Yes, I'm Barry North."

"Well, I'm Sam Derby—and I want to see you bad!"

"What is it you want to see me about, Mr. Derby?" I winked across at Alstan.

"Oh, you know what I want, you dirty thief! I run into Foster and he gave me Merriman's address. I just had a wire from him. Now, you'll come thru—quick!"

"You have the wrong number, son," I said to Derby. "I'm just a poor, hard-working bank clerk, so I can't know what you mean."

"None of that!" snapped the raspy voice. "You've double-crossed me and you've played the Syndicate for a sucker, but you're going to come square with me. Now, I want that twenty-three thousand that you have of mine!"

I had forgotten all about the money I had collected. But that gave me an idea.

"Well, suppose we meet somewhere and talk it over," I suggested.

"Have him out here," whispered Miss Bourke, leaning toward me.

I looked at her and smiled. Then I spoke into the telephone.

"Come on out," I invited. "I can soon convince you that you are mistaken."

As I hung up the receiver after giving Derby directions for finding the place, Mrs. Gray came in to say that Mr. Evans wished to see me. I wanted to have a talk with Alstan, but there was no chance. I went up to Evans' room. The doctor opened the door to me.

"I think I'll take a few days at Murietta Springs," said Evans, grimacing at a twinge in his bad leg. "I have planned to go in the morning. I've dictated a few instructions for you, North. We'll let the vault business stand until I get back."

VI.

I LEFT Evans as soon as I could get away. Time was flying and there were many things for me to do before night came. Derby was due in a few minutes and I was not quite sure how my conference with him would come out. At any rate I must keep him from Evans.

I hurried down to the telephone at the drug store and called the sergeant at central station, with whom I had made tentative arrangements. My instructions were brief.

"Have a couple of men and a fast machine opposite the Hill street station at 10 tonight. Somewhere across the street have another man a motorcycle. I will stop across from the station at 10:15. A taxicab will drive up to where I stand. I will put a suitcase into the cab. When it drives away I want both the automobile and the motorcycle to follow it."

It was dusk when I returned to the house. I looked carefully, but I failed to see any one in the street or in the shadows on the corner. Either the men who had been watching the place had been called off, or else they were keeping well out of sight. Again I wondered who those watchers were. Were they employes of the Syndicate stationed there to aid me? Or were they working on the other side? In the latter case they might hinder my plans for the night—no, they were not interested in me, for they had made no attempt to follow me from the house. I went in. Miss Bourke was not in sight. I went to my room, wrote a note and enclosed it in an envelope with some currency. I was about to hunt again for Alstan when I heard a shot in the street—then another.

I hurried from my room. I saw Alstan run from Evans' room. Thru the door that she left open I saw the banker sitting on his bed—listening.

Alstan ran down the stairs ahead of me. She stopped upon the porch, but I walked down to the gate. There was no one in sight. Quite puzzled, I returned to the porch.

"I was sure those shots were in the street," I remarked to Alstan, who was sitting on the porch railing.

"Some prowling burglar," she returned carelessly. "They're getting pretty thick around here."

The telephone tinkled and the girl dropped quickly from her perch and ran inside. She was at the instrument only an instant. When she came out to me she was so changed that I hardly knew her.

"It was your friend Derby," she said, her eyes hard as steel. "An officer—stopped him." Something of the human wonder that I had noted before came into her wondrous eyes. "What would you have done had he reached you?"

"Why"—I laughed happily—"I would have—stopped him."

"You are a brave man," she murmured softly, but with almost the same breath her manner changed and her head went up with a jerk. "Enough of this fooling!" she snapped, and I could feel the world of power back of her speech. "We'd better understand each other—right now." Her voice dropped to a whisper. "You are planning to rob the Metropolitan tonight!"

All at once I saw the futility of trying to argue with this girl. I had intended to tell her in a businesslike way that the game was up and that I wanted to save her from the wreck of the United Syndicate. But now I knew that such a course would be useless. No matter why she had protected me, knowing that I was not what I pretended to be, she was going to play the game to the end.

But there was a way—age-old. I drew the note that I had prepared from my pocket. For once I forgot to laugh—in my earnestness I know my voice was husky.

"I don't know who you are, girl—it doesn't matter. I just know that you're the girl I've wanted all my life. And—tonight will see the end of the United Syndicate. Officers are now watching the agents in all parts of the country. Before morning they will be under arrest."

I saw her bite her lip. She drew back, startled by my vehemence. I thrust the envelope into her hand.

"There's my mother's address—and money to take you to her. The Salt Lake limited leaves at 9. I——"

Footsteps sounded in the room behind me, but I did not care. Nothing in all the world could disturb me.

For the girl who had been all strength and power crumpled into a drooping figure. She clutched the letter to her breast. Her full lips trembled, and I could see a filmy mist gather in her eyes. She leaned toward me and a woman's heart spoke to me in a language that I could not fail to understand.

"Why," she murmured brokenly. "Oh, Barry—why, I don't even know your name!"

Then I did laugh, but as I reached for her the doctor's gruff cough and Mrs. Gray's too-loud clatter warned me that we were observed.

However, I was satisfied and my heart sang with joy. When I started out on my dangerous trip a few minutes later Alstan gave me a furtive smile, and I was quite sure that when morning came the girl I loved would be far away from Los Angeles and safe from the wreck of the United Syndicate.

VII.

I CHUCKLED as I used my passkey to enter the bank from the lobby of the Winters building. How ridiculously easy it was to rob the Metropolitan, thanks to Evans assigning me to the duty of studying vaults.

Because of the preparation that I had made it was but a matter of five minutes until I came out with my heavy suitcase. Briskly I walked the six blocks to the rendezvous point on Hill street.

It was 10:12 when I reached Hill at Fifth, within sight of my destination. I could see the motorcycle and the closed automobile waiting across the street, and as I walked slowly along I saw a taxicab stalling farther up the street.

I stepped to the curb opposite the station. Hardly had I placed my suitcase at my feet when the taxicab drew up. The driver reached back and opened the door. As I tossed the suitcase in I peered at the muffled figure inside, but I could make out nothing that would aid me in identifying the receiver of the loot. If only he would now lead the way to the "higher up."

The taxi drove on. The big car across the street waited until the taxi had turned to the left at the next corner, then it shot ahead. The motorcycle sputtered, swung in front of the big car and turned the corner.

I drew a deep breath. My job was done. I could do no more. Now I must be sure that Alstan had gone on that evening train. Then I would have a few words with President Evans.

I hailed a yellow taxicab and was driven out to the big place on the hill. There were no lights downstairs. Was she gone? Of course—my worry was unnecessary.

As I fumbled for my passkey I tried the door and, to my surprise, I found it unlocked. Then I breathed again. Alstan had not sprung the catch when she went out.

As I entered the hall I heard a car stop in front. I grinned as I stepped into the darkness. Already the hounds of the law that I had unleashed were hunting for Alstan Bourke.

I heard a step in the upper hall and, altho the angle was such that I could not see the landing, I was sure that some one was looking down. Was it Mrs. Gray?

The outer door opened. I slipped into the corner beside the stairs. Footsteps passed me in the darkness, and a figure moved up the staircase. Muffled voices sounded from above. I felt a chill creeping down my spine.

Very quietly I climbed the stairs. I paused before Evans' door and noted the hum of voices inside. Determined to know the worst I entered the little hall adjoining. The door into Evans' room was ajar. I listened.

"That is fine!" came Evans' voice. "Now to get away. Your car is waiting?"

"Yes—but I fear that I was followed here!"

Suddenly I wanted to crawl away and let the world crash upon me. For it was Alstan Bourke who spoke.

"Oh, you're mistaken," Evans said, and a surge of angry resentment almost swept away my reason. Suddenly I saw much to which I had been blind before. Evans had been much too interested in vaults—wooden-headed tho I was, I had meant to question him. I slipped into the room while he was speaking.

"You had better go at once. Now, you understand just what you are to do? Take the Pacific Electric tonight to Riverside, and catch the Southern Pacific for Yuma tomorrw morning. You will have plenty of time. The theft will be discovered Monday morning, but the officers will lose several days trying to follow North. And don't forget that you are to meet North in Manzatlan."

So Evans was taking advantage of the fact that I was in love with Alstan and had planned to throw us together in our flight.

I saw Alstan's face as Evans fumbled with the suitcase. There was upon it that same scornful smile—that might mean anything. Then she tossed her head, turned toward the bathroom door—and saw me.

A peculiar glint came into her eyes. She shrugged her shoulders expressive of a disgusted "You here again?" and edged away from Evans.

The banker, working at the catch of the suitcase, suddenly raised his eyes.

"North!" he snapped. "What are you doing here?"

"I followed that suitcase," I lied. "I was curious to know where it would go."

"What do you mean?" He rose to his feet and took a step toward me. I noticed that he did not limp.

"I mean that I am hunting for the head of the United Syndicate—or was. I think I've found him."

EVANS laughed scornfully, then his eyes went to Alstan's expressionless face.

"You are making a poor joke. I never heard of a United Syndicate."

Alstan moved closer to Evans' side with an intimate gesture that seemed to place her definitely upon his side.

"Why didn't you take the chance I gave you?" I demanded.

"Why should I run away?" She moved still closer to Evans.

"Because I wanted to save you," I retorted. "And I will save you yet! Mr. Evans, I shall ask you to go with me!"

I thought he drooped a little at that, but Miss Bourke laughed.

"Just what is the charge?" she asked.

"Attempted looting of the Metropolitan!"

"Oh, is that it?" Her voice was mocking.

"Why deny it?" I demanded of Evans. "I was sent here by the Syndicate for the express purpose of doing this. Upon written instructions I went to the bank tonight, and—and brought away that suitcase. You"—I tried to look at Alstan—"you brought it here!"

Evans frowned. I could read his mind. He knew his powerful system was crumbling. He looked at Alstan and I wondered if he would be man enough to

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save her. But she laughed lightly.

"That suitcase? Why, you're joking! We'll open it and see."

Quick as a flash she dragged the suitcase upon the bed and jerked it open. I was watching Evans' face when she dumped the forty pounds of blank checks upon the bed.

Evans' consternation and the relief that followed was laughable. His hard eyes were upon me as I turned again to Alstan. For a moment I forgot Evans. When I looked at him again he had a gun pointed at my face.

"So you're a fake!" he said shortly. "You've been after me all the time. All right, for your satisfaction—I am the United Syndicate. But you will not arrest me. Miss Bourke will be able to testify to the manner in which you were killed. You tried to rob the bank and I caught you!"

I smiled into his gray face. Here was a tight hole from which there was little hope of escape. And I didn't care much. Alstan was lost to me. Eventually they would be caught. I shrugged my shoulders and looked again at Alstan standing close beside Evans.

She, too, was smiling, and as I looked, her right hand rose and swung over toward Evans. In it was a small automatic that pressed firmly into Evans' side.

"Don't shoot!" Her voice was low but in it there was a steely ring. Then as Evans' hand wavered—"Get his gun, Barry!"

Mechanically I took the gun from Evans' powerless hand. His puzzled eyes searched the girl's face. A grayish pallor appeared around his mouth.

"What now?" he whispered huskily. "What do you mean, Alstan?"

"I just don't want you to kill Barry," she replied, her eyes shining with mischief. "I—he's asked me to—to marry him!"

I stared, and as I did so two husky men stepped quietly from the bathroom and at Alstan's nod lined up behind Evans. Suddenly the room was full of men. I recognized the man who had driven Alstan's taxicab, and the motorcycle rider who had followed. Quietly in the foreground stood a secret service man whom I had known for years. Slowly I began to understand.

Alstan smiled at me as she hid her gun.

"Barry," she said softly, "you're a rotten detective—but for nerve——"

"But you——"

"Me? Oh, I'm with the Government——"

"But when I saw you in Chicago?"

"Oh—there! Why, I'd just got the goods on that bunch, but I needed a conviction record. I—I didn't serve that sentence. Why, I got this job with Evans on the strength of that record. And I've made good!" She nodded to my secret service friend. "I've helped Douglas Evans rob three banks—and I have the complete accounts of the United Syndicate."

"You—you——" spluttered Evans.

"Yes," she explained, ignoring Evans, "between Mr.—er—North and myself, we have caught them all. Either Federal officers or Mr. North's men will arrest every Syndicate agent before morning."

Suddenly I became myself.

"Well, you've lost your record," I stated. "Your value in this line is destroyed."

She smiled tenderly.

"I was thru anyway. It's a miserable life."

"How about a little ranch?" I whispered eagerly.

"But I'll never marry a detective—especially one who takes wild chances."

"It's a bargain!" I gloated. "After the trials are over—that little ranch——"

"Oh!" Her face was radiant. "Won't that be great! But—why—what is your name?"

The End.

The Pirate Woman

(Continued From Page 13)

ment. The darkness of Erebus fell upon the surging vessels, and men groped at the rails in a blind effort to make out a footing for boarding the sloop.

"Follow me; I want Yellow Rufe alive!" cried Dolores, leaving the wheel and springing to the bulwarks. Instinctively Peters stepped to the wheel, and as he passed his employer he leaned to whisper in his ear:

"Let them once leave these decks, sir, and we'll up hellum and away!"

Venner's eyes glittered at the prospect; but he could not see the faces of his friends; he could only hear Pearse's low tones beside him, and the mumbled words indicated no great agreement in the scheme. Uncertain, his mind confused between desire to escape and desire to see more of Dolores and her hidden Cave of Wonders, Rupert Venner hesitated with his decision; and in the next moment it was out of his power to decide. For Rufe, in desperation now, met the boarders at the rail, backed by his half-dozen crazed adherents, and murderous steel glittered dully against the inky sky.

"Beat down his cringing curs, but leave me Rufe!" cried Dolores, opposing her own dagger to the sweep of the pirate's cutlass. And as the schooner's crew roared at Hanglip's heels, storming over to the pitching sloop's decks to pursue mercilessly the panic-stricken runaways, the girl pitted agility and splendid knife-craft against the terror-driven strength and wolfish fury of the trapped traitor.

"Hah! Thy black heart fails thee!" taunted Dolores, leaping down from the rail to the schooner's streaming deck and thus avoiding a whistling stroke of Rufe's cutlass. The pirate fell forward with the impetus of his blow, and stumbled in a heap at the girl's nimble feet. "Up, man!" she cried, leaping back to permit him to rise. "What, art afraid of a woman? Here then, I prick thee! Now wilt fight?" She darted her dagger swiftly downward, and the partially healed cross on Rufe's cheek blazed red again.

"Woman or devil, I'll see thy heart for that!" swore the pirate, and rose with a bound, and hurled himself at the girl. She stepped aside agilely, and laughed mockingly at him, while as he again stumbled with the swing of his avoided blow she darted close and her knife ripped his sword arm from wrist to elbow.

Mouthing crazily with fury, Rufe leaped backward until his shoulder struck the rigging, and seizing his cutlass in his left hand he poised it by the blade for a deadly javelin cast.

NOW upon the scene flared a great blaze, and Stumpy's scowling face appeared in the midst of it. He, with readier wit than his fellows, had sought out a tar-pot and lamp; and at the moment his mistress stood defenseless before the impending steel, the club-footed pirate poured lamp oil into the tar, and cast the flaring wick on top of all.

A circle of light spread from wheel to foremast, with Yellow Rufe at the main rigging in the center of it. The light dazzled him for a second, and his throw was stayed. The three yachtsmen huddled in their chains aft stared in helpless amazement at the tableau; for such it became, when the fight stopped for a breath and every man's passion-filled face was lighted by the red glare.

"Shoot him down!" shouted Pearse, in horror. And Venner and Tomlin strove for words without success. Venner was dumb and sick in face of Dolores' peril. Yellow Rufe uttered a grim, Satanic growl of laughter and drew back his arm for the cast. His plight was utterly desperate; he knew death waited for him with clutching talons; and with his last breath he would reap toll that should make his name a thing to recall with dread afterward.

"This for thy witch's heart!" he howled, and his arm quivered. Then out of the shadows aloft, above the smoky flare, came down the tremendous shape of Milo, forgotten in his post at the masthead, but never taking his eyes from his Sultana.

Like a gorilla he slipped down the topping-lift with one hand; with the other hand he reached downward with a swift, sure clutch, and as Rufe's wrist flexed to cast his javelin Milo's hand gripped him by the neck from behind and swung him bodily off his feet while the wide-flung cutlass flashed thru the air and plunged with a hiss over the side.

"I thank thee again, Milo," said Dolores, slipping her dagger into the sheath and looking on at Rufe's struggles with the unconcern of one far apart from the actual conflict. "I wished to take him alive; yet had almost been forced to cut too deply. Bring the villain to me. And Cariban, get more flares, lanterns, lights, and make us a theater of justice here."

She stepped aft, saw Peters at the wheel, and smiled as she realized how her boarding of the sloop might have resulted.

"Hah, but it would have availed thee nothing!" she smiled at Venner. "I read thy heart as I read the stars, friend. Watch how completely Yellow Rufe pays

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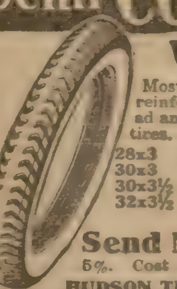

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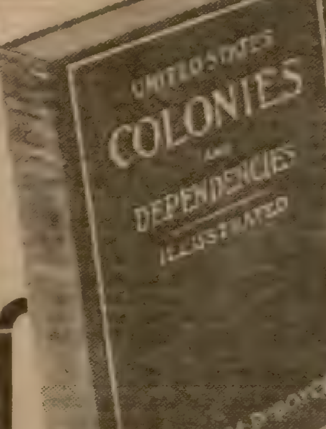

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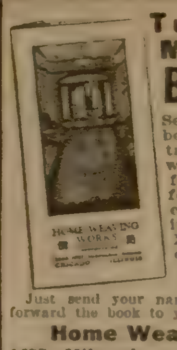

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his debt to me. He has fled me thru forest and mountain; thru a sea of howling storm; yet he pays. And thus all men pay who think to flout Dolores. Keep thy eyes wide, friends, and watch."

Yellow Rufe was brought before her, and his swarthy face was pallid in the red light. There was something of the splendid beast about this fellow, too; a quality that showed even when he faced certain death, and no merciful one. He had run, and when overtaken he had fought; and now he must pay.

"Hanglip, to the wheel here!" Dolores commanded. "Six of you bring back the sloop. The rest, attend me! Bring the schooner to her course, northwest, Hanglip; and Spotted Dog, rig me a whip at the fore-gaff-end. Yellow Rufe, pray or curse while ye may. Thy course is run. There is nothing left to say. Ten minutes remains to thee."

The doomed pirate stood in silence while the preparations were being made; but when Spotted Dog brought down the end of the rope he had rove thru the block at the end of the gaff, and stood grinning anticipatively before Dolores, Rufe's tongue came loose, and he burst into a torrent of futile, raving blasphemy.

"Take the rope end forward, and pass it around the bows, so that the rope passes beneath the keel," Dolores ordered, and every eager villain in the band knew now what fate awaited Rufe. The schooner, not being square-rigged, was badly fitted for the operation of keel-hauling; but Dolores' inventive brain had devised a refinement of even that refinement of torture. She waited for the rope end, and when Spotted Dog brought it aft, on the weather side, passing clear from the gaff to leeward, under the keel and up to windward, she stood aside so that the yachtsmen could witness all.

"Tie his hands, Milo!" she said. It was carried out in spite of Rufe's fierce fight against it. "Now place the noose from Rufe's neck, over the weather rail, under the schooner, and up to the gaff. Three men stood by the hauling part of the rope, and at a gesture from the girl six others joined them. On every face was a little doubt, for none saw exactly what was coming, least of all Rufe.

"Now release him!" said Dolores, quietly, and Rufe was left standing alone, his hands tied but his feet unfettered. He glared around as if he saw a slim chance yet for life; the hope died the next moment, for Dolores signed to the men at the rope, they began hauling, and the terror leaped into Rufe's eyes afresh.

For a moment Venner and his friends saw what they imagined to be a piece of grim jesting; but they, as well as Rufe, speedily saw there was no jest in this. For as the rope tightened, and other roaring ruffians ran joyously to take a pull at it, Rufe was drawn irresistibly towards the weather rail with a choking drag on his throat. He seized the rail, and strained with his every sinew to fight that deadly pull; the rope only tightened more; it was either go or strangle for him; fight as he might, he was forced to climb on the rail, to aid in his own funeral.

The yatchtsmen turned dizzy with the awfulness of the man's end; but they could not take their fascinated eyes from the scene. They saw Rufe topple over the rail with a choking curse, and saw the rope pull him under the vessel; they saw the rope quiver to the pirates' lusty pull as the victim was battered against the keel. And they saw the terrible figure leap from the sea to leeward and fly to the gaff-end as the men ran away with the rope to a roaring chorus. But they saw no more. Their eyes refused to look at a repetition of that horror. And Dolores, watching them keenly, came to them and, after giving final orders regarding Yellow Rufe's body, she took their chains in her hand and said, very quietly:

"When again the thought comes to leave me, gentlemen, think well upon what I have showed thee. Now come below. I owe thee some refreshment after a night of storm. 'Twill be dawn ere the schooner can beat back to my haven. Come. I will serve thee with supper."

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE schooner's saloon the atmosphere was peaceful by contrast with the hurly-burly outside; yet even here the steep slant of the deck, the shrill, protesting squeal of working frames and beams, the sullen thud and swish of racing seas along the vessel's skin kept the storm ever in mind; the dizzy plunge of the bows into great gray seas, with its accompanying rise of the stern and the hollow jar and thump of the rudder-post in its port, kept the interior humming with sound as from a distant organ.

Again chained to the mainmast, the three yachtsmen stood gloomily regarding Dolores, whose capable, battle-wise fingers now performed a task more in keeping with her sex and charm. Under the great swing-lamp in the skylight she leaned over the table, mixing wine in low, stout cups, spreading a silver salver with food from the pantry. And a thrilling picture she made in the soft glow of the lamp. Her beautiful face glowed with a warm color; her scarlet lips were slightly opened in a brilliant smile; she swayed with superb grace to the tremendous lurches of the driving schooner, intent upon her task, ignoring all outside affairs.

Her preparations completed, she placed tray and cups at the end of the table nearest the mainmast, turned around the deep armchair which had been the owner's own, and sat down, offering a cup and the tray with a little laugh of satisfaction.

"Come, friend Rupert," she said, thrilling Venner again with her vibrant voice. "Thou shall be first. Eat—and drink. See, for thee I do this." She raised the cup to her lips, and kissed the brim, fixing her fathomless eyes full on Venner as she did so. He struggled with his feelings for a moment, and hated himself heartily for even debating his attitude. But he fell, as he had done before, dazzled by her witchery. His eyes blazed, his blood leaped, and he took the cup with a mumbled attempt at thanks. Dolores smiled at his confusion, and in that smile was the allure of a Circe.

Venner's expression became less tense as he noted the faces of his fellows; for in their eyes he read jealousy, rank and stark, and it warmed him to the marrow. In the next instant his warmth rose to fever heat, and malice twisted his features; Dolores had taken another cup, and now she offered it to Pearse, with a smile yet more gracious than before.

"My silent friend, here's to thee, too," she murmured. His cup she kissed twice, and presented it carefully so that the place she kissed was against his lips. "Drink. I have sweetened it."

As Venner's brows darkened, so did John Pearse conquer his first flush of self-contempt and put on a smile that irradiated his usually serious face. And Tomlin brightened, too, waiting in what patience he could master for his turn, which must come next. To him Dolores turned, cup in hand, and rising at the same time gave him his wine with a brief: "Here, drink, too. I must leave thee awhile."

She forced the cup into Tomlin's trembling fingers, gave him never a glance, but went out of the saloon on her errand.

When he realized she was gone, Craik Tomlin dashed down the wine like a petulant boy, and cursed deeply and fiercely. And not until then did Venner and Pearse awake to the true artistry of the woman; for here, instead of making a Tomlin a raging foe, willing to plot with all the power of his alert brain for their ultimate release, she had aroused a demon of black jealousy in him which promised to set all three by the ears.

Restricted as their movements were, they were forced to nurse whatever feelings Dolores had implanted in them in full sight of each other. And Tomlin left no doubt as to his feelings. At the furthest scope of his chain he flung himself down on the slanting floor and crouched there with dull-glowing eyes bent loweringly upon his friends. Venner laughed awkwardly, and glanced at Pearse; the laugh died away and left a silence between them that was vividly accentuated by the manifold voices of the laboring vessel. For in the swift meeting of eyes, John Pearse and Venner, host and guest, friends to that moment, saw in each other an established rival, a potential foe. Involuntarily they drew apart; and when Dolores returned from the deck she found them spread out like star rays, having nothing in common except a common center.

She gave no sign that she noticed them; but her heavy-fringed lids drooped over eyes brimming with gratification. As she stepped from the stairs the schooner swung upright, the deck overhead thundered to the slamming of booms as she came about, and then the cabin sloped the other way, rolling the scattered wine cups noisily across the floor. Neither man looked up; but Tomlin's cup rolled so that it struck his foot, and he gave voice to a deep oath,

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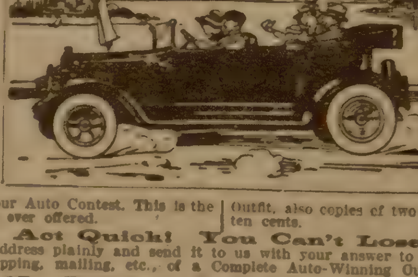

terrible in its uncalled-for savagery. Then Dolores gave them outward notice for the first time.

With a low, pleasant laugh she stepped quickly to Tomlin's side, laid a hand on his sullen head and forced him to look up at her.

"I owe thee something, friend," she smiled, and Tomlin flushed hotly under her close regard. "I treated thee badly in my haste. Come——" she went to the sideboard, filled another cup with wine, and came back, kneeling before Tomlin in the attitude of a slave while her big eyes blazed full into his. "Drink, for I like thee best," she whispered, sipping the wine and putting the brim, warm from her lips, to his. And Tomlin drank, deeply, greedily, trembling under her close proximity. He felt her hand take his chain, heard the tinkle of links, and knew, without seeing, that she had unlocked his fetters and he was free.

"Now sit here with me, and you shall tell me about your world, my friend, the world you shall take me to."

She spoke in a soft, thrilling voice that set Tomlin's blood leaping; and as she spoke she led him to Venner's great chair and sat him down in it. Then, facing at the length of the table her other two captives, she stood behind the big chair, her arms on the top, leaning low to Tomlin's ear, her lips almost brushing his cheek. And she whispered to him, musically, seductively; her jeweled fingers played with his hair, the soft, warm skin of her arms slid over his neck and face; when, in a frenzy, he reached impulsively for her hand and gripped it, she laughed yet more deliciously and permitted him to hold it.

"Why must you seek another world, Dolores?" Tomlin said hoarsely. "Here you are queen. Out in the greater world you can be no more. Stay, and let me stay with you."

"And would my paltry possessions pay thee for renouncing thy people, thy home?" she asked, laying her lovely face against his, and closing her eyes.

"Home? People? God! I renounce Heaven itself if you say yes!"

"We shall see, my friend," Dolores sighed, and Tomlin felt her tremble slightly. "My chief desire is to leave behind me this life of herder to human beasts. To go into the world whence comes such as thee, Tomlin; to live among the people who can make such as these——" she indicated the rich furnishings of the saloon, the sideboard silver and plate, the stained glass of the skylight. "All these things I have, and more—nay, but thy treasures are nothing compared with what I shall show thee in the Great Chamber—yet must I keep them hidden because of the beasts that call me Sultana! Where they came from, these treasures, must be men like thee, Tomlin, women like the painted women of my gallery, people with the art to make these things instead of the brute power to steal them. And there I will go, and thou art to be my guide."

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"Then in Heaven's name, let us go now!" cried Tomlin, trying to rise. She laughed in his ear again, and her soft, warm arms pressed him back in the chair with a power that amazed him. "We shall go, in good season," she whispered. "But——" The rest was murmured so faintly, yet so tremendously audible to his super-heated brain, that he drew back and stared up at her with an awful expression of mingled unbelief and horror distorting his face.

"Do you know what you say?" he gasped, and shot an apprehensive glance toward Venner and Pearse.

"Surely, my friend," she crooned. "Thyself alone, of those who came in this ship, may return. If I am desirable, see to it that I can be pleased with thee." Dolores stood up, bent upon him a dazzling smile, leaned as if to kiss his lips, then with a tinkling little ripple of mirth blew a kiss instead and ran up the companion stairs to the deck.

TOMLIN stood glaring after her as if fascinated. His face, deeply flushed a moment before, had gone deathly white; his profile, turned under the lamp towards his companions, showed deeply puckered brows over stony eyes, lips parted as if to utter a cry of horror. And Venner, fuming inwardly, had seen enough to recall some of his badly scattered wits. He called Tomlin by name, hoarsely, softly, and exclaimed when he looked around:

"Tomlin, shall we three be ruined body and soul by that sorceress? Come, help us out of these chains, and we will make a bid for liberty. We can reach Peters and such men as are left by way of the alleyway to the forecastle; I know where weapons are to be got, and we'll put our fate on the cast. Come. Pearse is of a like mind, eh, Pearse?"

Pearse did not reply at once, and Tomlin saved him the trouble, for, recovering himself with a shudder, he put a hand on the companion-rail and started up the stairs with a laugh of contempt.

"I have no concern with your troubles, Venner," he said. "As for liberty, I am free as air. I believe patience is the medicine you need."

Tomlin reached the deck with tingling ears, for even Pearse came out of his reverie to curse him in chorus with Venner. But curses or benedictions counted nothing at that moment. In every patch of light he saw Dolores' devilishly lovely face; in every swing of the vessel he saw her consummate grace; he was a thirsty man seeking a spring, knowing full well that a draught must kill him. He stood alone outside the companionway, wondering at the absence of people, at the absence of Dolores. A solitary man stood at the wheel, and, looking around for others, Tomlin noticed vaguely that the black storm was broken, that watery stars were winking down, and that almost in the zenith a gibbous moon leaned like a brimming dipper of quicksilver, ready to drop from the inky cloud that had but just uncovered it.

Then voices reached his ears from forward, voices full of wondering anger, and he stepped out clear of the deckhouse and peered ahead on the windward side. There, two miles away, the land loomed black and forbidding; and high up, on a crest, a great red blaze leaped and swirled against the flying clouds.

As he stared, Dolores ran aft, ignoring him utterly in her haste. Her men grouped themselves along the waist of the schooner, waiting for commands. The Feu Follett was already doing her best, that is, the best under such sail as was safe to carry. But there, to windward, and yet two miles distant, some part of the pirate village was burning, and none might say what part it was. The one thing certain was, that it could not be the Great Chamber. That was of rock; it might be destroyed by an explosion; never by fire. So there was a ring of exultation in Dolores' tone when she sent the hail along:

"Loose both topsails and set them! Caliban, thou small villain, out and loose the outer-jib. Main-sheet here! Oh, haul, bullies! Flat—more yet—so, belay!"

Then the girl flung the man from the wheel, seized the spokes herself, and began to nurse the schooner to windward with truly superhuman art. Closer yet she brought the graceful craft; closer, until the luffs trembled and the seas burst fair upon the stem and volleyed stinging spray the full length of her. And as she drew nearer, the blaze seemed to diminish, and blaze afresh as if firefighters were there indeed, but lacking weapons to fight with.

"Is it the treasure house?" Tomlin asked anxiously, stepping beside the girl. She stood in a deep shadow; the dim radiance from the lighted binnacle touched her face, breast and arms with soft light, and her eyes, as they flashed swiftly towards the man glittered with some subtle quality that sent a shiver running down his spine.

"Treasure house!" she repeated, and her voice was no longer soft and alluring; it was metallic and menacing. For the second time, first in Venner, now in Tomlin, she had seen the true source of their fascination. "No, it is not the treasure house. It is the council hall, where thou wert lodged." She snatched her gaze from the compass and fixed him with the cold, unwinking stare of a snake. "Where thou wert lodged, my friend, who would renounce all for me. Where, had I cared to, I might have left two of ye, taking with me to safety only the one whose brains are not afire with soulless gold and jewels."

Tomlin grew hot and uneasy. "My brain is on fire with your beauty, Dolores," he returned, trying to force her gaze to meet his again.

"You will have a chance to prove it to me, then," she replied shortly, and waved him away, devoting her attention now to making the anchorage, already close to.

"Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," we are told, but what about three men madly in love with the same dazzling queen? Woe be to the vampire woman's latest hero if he fails to put pure heart-love above man's desire for worldly treasures! The nature of Tomlin's supreme test ought to crop out in the next installment of the story, which will be in the Ledger next week.

* * *

A Kindly Kind of Debtors.

"HE'S got to give me a job!" said the boarder in arrears. "He owes me money and he has got to give me a job!"

"What has his owing you money got to do with it?" inquired the argumentative boarder. "Jobs are awarded according to qualifications, and the fact that the man owes you money does not qualify you!"

"Well, I don't know whether it's a qualification or not, but I do know that it should get me the job."

"There is," declared the worldly-wise boarder, "some truth, also wisdom, in what you say. There is a certain type of man who will do almost anything for the person to whom he owes money, except pay the debt. A man owed me money once, and he treated me to a drink every time he saw me or gave me a cigar or a lift in his automobile. He gave me cigars of a make and texture which I myself could never have afforded to buy. Genuine, sun-cured, hand-massaged, needle-shaped cigars, nice and fat and roly-poly! He owned an automobile with big, soft cushions upon which to lean luxuriously. I never could afford an automobile. But to pay me he never was able!"

"I knew a man like that," said the observant boarder. "He owed a fellow pretty nearly a thousand dollars, and he never paid it. That is, he never did go and say: "Here's that $1,000 I borrowed from you!"

"But he was always kind of paying it in a sort of way. He got the man a job, and jobs for several of the man's friends. He got him transportation for himself and his family. He invited the man and his family out to his country place, and when the man's family was away he invited him out to his house to dinner nearly every night. The fellow who had loaned the money was in bad with his employer most of the time, and the man who owed the money had a pull with the employer and saved the man's job to him many times."

"It seems to me that the man that owed the money almost paid it back, didn't he?" observed the pretty teacher.

"Well, that's what the man who owed the money thought, and so did his family. They thought they had paid it many times over. But you see in an account like that, where you borrow a fixed sum and don't pay it back in actual cash, it doesn't count at all, no matter how many cigars, jobs, meals, rides and other things you have given your creditor. You still owe exactly what you borrowed. Cigars and dinners and things do not apply on account. An obligation can never be discharged on such terms."

"In other words," said the silly boarder, "all you can do is give it leave of absence or something."

"It is much better," declared the landlady, "to discharge your obligations by the cash process. That's the only way you can ever get rid of them."

The boarder in arrears said nothing.

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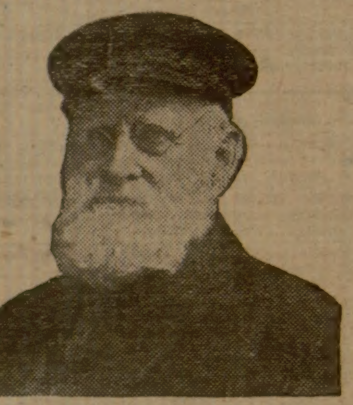

Mr. Jacob Lyon, Homer, Mich.

I wish that you could hear him tell of his many experiences with ointments, salves, dilators, etc., before he tried my method. Here is a letter just received from him:

Mr. E. R. Page, Marshall, Mich.

Dear Sir: I want you to know what your treatment has done for me. I had suffered with piles for many years and used suppositories and all kinds of treatments, but never got relief until I tried yours. Am now completely cured. Although I am 88 years old, and the oldest active blacksmith in Michigan, I feel years younger since the piles have left me. I will surely recommend it to all I know who suffer this way. You can use my letter any way you wish and I hope it will lead others to try this wonderful remedy.

Yours truly,
J. L. LYON.

There are thousands of afflicted people suffering with piles who have never yet tried the one sensible way of treating them.

Don't be cut. Don't waste money on foolish salves, ointments, dilators, etc., but send today for a Free Trial of my internal method for the healing of Piles.

No matter whether your case is of long standing or recent development—whether it is occasional or permanent—you should send for this free trial treatment.

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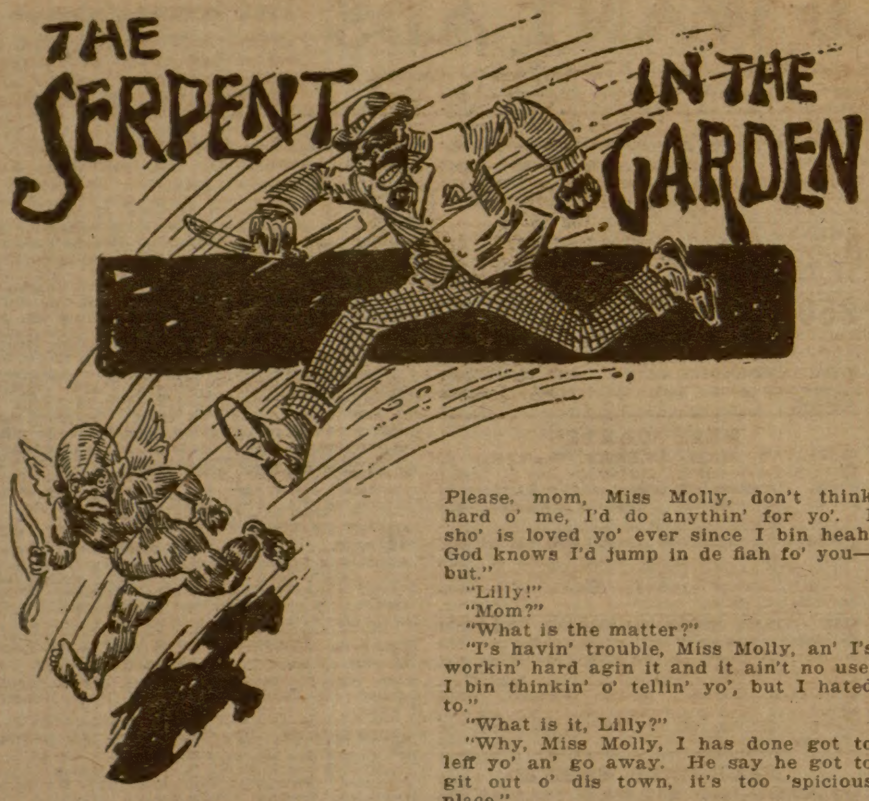
THE SERPENT IN THE GARDEN



"MOS' ev'body mos' ginnerly calls me Lilly, but my long name is Lilah," she said, applying for housework and cooking.

I needed her so much and the round black face beamed so with honesty and intelligence that I hastened to engage her.

She strengthened a good impression, made by her personal appearance, in coming to begin work on the very morning she promised to come, I am happy to record once, instead of deferring the beginning two, three, or four days or perhaps a week from the time promised, in obedience to some demand, fancied or real, for her presence elsewhere.

Lilly brought no excuses for tardiness with her, as the others had done, nor any recommendations, as the others had done—nothing but her neat dress, her honest eyes and her round cheeks, that her race must call classic features. And, best of all, she set to work straightening up at once a very badly disordered kitchen which my tired hands had not been able to reach that morning.

I had discovered a gem of efficiency in Lilly thru her first work. She had arranged every pot and pan in that kitchen just as I should have done it. Instinctively I began to wonder the very first day what turn in the shifting life of domestic would rob me of her, as I had been robbed of the one or two good ones before, but nothing happened for six long, bright, happy months.

Then:

"I sho' would be proud of de wraps an' de watahproof, Miss Molly, de Lawd knows I needs 'em bad 'nough dese cool wet mornin's—but."

I looked at her in amazement. Had Lilly so departed from every characteristic of her race and class in that matter that she actually refused presents of clothing?

All the others had unblushingly begged such articles of me.

"Have you any scruples as to accepting presents, Lilly?" I asked, still puzzled.

"When I laks a person, Miss Molly, I has no disobjections to takin' what dey offahs me—but."

I reeled at this thrust and sat down on a bench, while the black face, with a trace of discontent in it, bent over the dishwashing unconscious of the tragedy.

I had lost Lilly's love!

"No'm, yo' ain't, Miss Molly—no mom. Please, mom, Miss Molly, don't think hard o' me, I'd do anythin' for yo'. I sho' is loved yo' ever since I bin heah. God knows I'd jump in de fiah fo' you—but."

"Lilly!"

"Mom?"

"What is the matter?"

"I's havin' trouble, Miss Molly, an' I's workin' hard agin it and it ain't no use. I bin thinkin' o' tellin' yo', but I hated to."

"What is it, Lilly?"

"Why, Miss Molly, I has done got to leff yo' an' go away. He say he got to git out o' dis town, it's too 'spicious place."

"Who, Lilly?"

"Why, de man I goin' to mahry."

"I never knew you contemplated marriage," I said.

"I don't, only when I's with dat man. He sho' got me."

"Do you love him, Lilly?"

"No'm, I don't, I 'spises him; he sho' is a 'spisable niggah."

"Why, Lilly, and going to marry him!"

"Yes, mom, Miss Molly, I is. Not that I wants to, no, mom, Miss Molly; I knows I will; he do, too. He's got me conjured. I hates him when I'se ovah heah with you, but every night when I goes home, dar he sets an' cou'ts an' cou'ts till 12 o'clock, an' I kisses him good night."

"Kiss him, Lilly!"

"Yes, mom, I does. I can't help it, Miss Molly. I'd hate to take de wraps an' de watahproof knownin' I wan't comin' back no moah after nex' week, an' have yo' thinking hard o' me, Miss Molly, good as yo' is to me. Dey would be nice to wear in de cold an' rain t'wixt heah an' home, but no mom, Miss Molly, I couldn't treat yo' dat way. I can't take 'em, knowin' I ain't comin' back no moah."

Tears stole into the honest eyes and escaped down the round cheeks as she finished the sad sentence with trembling voice; and I with thoughts of bad dinners ahead for John, and a thousand other sad possibilities in the dissolution of the prevailing order, sought seclusion in my own little room.

Hopeless as the case was, I continued later to venture suggestions as to means of escape.

"'Taint no use, Miss Molly, I done tried to git out o' it an' I can't. I knows as well as anythin' when de time comes I'll jump up an' mahry dat fellah.

"Yo' can't get aroun' his talk an' nice mannahs an' his nice clothes—dat niggah so do put on de apparel; an' his mouth it look like a slice cut of a watahmelon.

"No, mom, Miss Molly, I knows he ain't no 'count an' I hates him for puttin' dis spell on me, an' would do anything to get out of it, but it ain't no use, I'll have to go to him like a charmed bird to a snake."

I shuddered.

"Yes, mom, I will. I was goin' to mahry de preacher, who I does love, an' who would let me stay on heah wid yo', but dis niggah say he goin' to take me out o' dis town."

"Oh, Lilly, marry the preacher!"

"I sho' would, but yo' see how it is, Miss Molly. I'd give a yeah's work to be out o' dis scrape."

"What is his name, Lilly?" I asked, idly.

"His name Mr. Samson."

In the darknesss the key had struck the lock—Samson.

"Why don't you clip off the seventh lock of his hair, Lilly, that he may become weak as other men?"

Lilly smiled blankly. She had never heard the story of the lady and the athlete. I got the Bible and read it for her, commenting thereon. That very night she told the preacher about it.

"My name is Delilah, Miss Molly, instead o' Lilah, just like yo' said yistidy. De preacher say so las' night; an' he read me de story over 'bout Samson an' dat Philistine white 'oman. I wish dat niggah's hair was long enough for me to slip, I'd sho' do it."

"Can't you do something to offend him, Lilly?"

"No, mom, not while I's with him, I can't—I loves him too good. If I could do somethin' to him on de sly I'd do it too quick, but when I's with him he's done got dat hoodoo spell on me so I can't do nothin' only what he say do."

"Delilah did with Samson, you know," I said.

"Yes, mom, but dat ol' racket don't go wid dis Samson; he got things his own way."

Not a day passed now that we did not discuss this matter; and Samson was ever tugging at the pillars of my happiness and firing the heart of Lily with a consuming flame as he did the cornfields of the Philistines.

The time flew on to the day preceding the wedding night and Lily struggled with moods alternate gay and sad.

"Dat Samson sho' is a dude wid dem banjo britches an' dat big red tie; an' de way he play de mandoleen is a sight. An' dem patent leather shoes an' cygyars he smoke. Oh, he's a red-hot membah, he is. He stay up aroun' de Pacific an' play music an' wait on de table all day now, but we goin' to start a restoroy of our own, 'fo' long."

But this morning she hummed a quaint old cotton-patch tune in a most musical tone in short metre.

"Tonight is the night, Lilly," I reminded her as I slipped into the kitchen.

"Law, Miss Molly, you scared me! Tonight is all right; de Philistines done got Samson."

"What!"

"Yes, mom, dey is. De white folks done come an' tuck dat niggah back to de pen'tent'ary. Dey say dey hold him dis time till he finish up dem twenty-one yeahs' vacation."

"How did it happen, Lilly?"

"Samson tol' me he broke out o' de pen an' I tol' de preacher. Den me an' de preacher got out in de gyarden an' wrote a letter to de pen'tent'ary boss. I say ef yo' don't come an' git dis niggah I sho' goin' to mahry him, I can't stan' dat honey mouth an' dem goo-goo eyes o' his no longah—I sho' did, Miss Molly. Yes, mom, I'll take de wraps an' de watahproof an' sho' be proud of 'em—de preacher say I can stay on heah."

* * *

Making Maple Sugar.

A FARMER saw some maple sugar on the counter of a grocery and he laughed and said:

"This reminds me. A gentleman came up near my place last fall and bought a farm. Along toward spring of this year he wanted to make maple sugar. He wanted me to tap the trees for him. I went after him and tapped them and he—he hasn't got any sugar yet."

"But what was the matter?" asked the grocer.

"Why, he marked every tree in the woods—beech, maple, oak, hickory, ash, chestnut, walnut, butternut, sycamore and all. He is wondering yet why we didn't get any sap, and he will probably go around telling that I am one of the poorest sugar-makers in this country."

* * *

First to Wear Spectacles.

WE HAVE to go to Italy to locate the grave of the man who first struck the idea of aiding his failing eyesight with two lenses attached in front of his eyes by two wires hooking on behind his Spina. He was a learned monk who lived in Florence. While at work on a beautifully illuminated missal, in 1285, his eyesight grew dim, and, intent upon finishing his task, he constructed the first pair of spectacles. The rest was easy for his fellow sufferers.

* * *

Promptly Changed His Mind.

SHE (sharply)—I trust you're coming home tonight promptly at 9 o'clock.

He (hesitatingly)—I had thought about 10——

She (interrupting very sharply)—What did you say?

He (quickly)—About 10 minutes to 9.

* * *

Works Both Ways.

JOHNSON—A statesman goes to Washington to see what good he can do the country.

Jackson—Ah, yes, but there are politicians of all sorts. Some of 'em go there to see what good the country can do them.

* * *

The Result.

FRIEND—I understand you took your son into your establishment a few months ago to teach him the business. How did it turn out?

Business Man (wearily)—Great success! He's teaching me now.

LEG SORES

The Bayles Distributing Co., 1856 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo., will mail Free Sample of ANTI-FLAMMA, a Soothing Anti-septic Poultice that draws out the poisons, stops the itching around sores and Heals While You Work. Write today describing case.—Adv.

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GALLSTONE TROUBLES

A new booklet, written by Dr. E. E. Paddock, Box 5 P 201, Kansas City, Mo., tells of improved method of treating catarrhal inflammation of the Gall Bladder and Bile Ducts associated with Gall Stones, from which remarkable results are reported. Write for booklet and free trial plan.—Adv.

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—Adv.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

LARGE PROFITS DAILY MADE IN THIS business. Openings everywhere. Small capital starts you. Complete outfits sold on installments. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Morton Building, Chicago.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FREE ENLARGEMENT 5 x 7 INCHES FROM each roll sent us for developing and finishing. Mail your films today, or send for prices and particulars. Topeka Photo Supply Co., Box 427, Topeka, Kans.

INVENTIONS

INVENTIONS WANTED—CASH OR ROYalty for ideas. Adam Fisher Mfg. Co., 44, St. Louis, Mo.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

Information-- The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in the Chicago Ledger is 35 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

SALESMEN WANTED

NEW SELLING PLAN. MEN WANTED TO supply consumer demand for our sugar, flour, canned goods, dried fruits, coffee and other staple groceries, and paints, roofing, aluminumware and automobile oils. Entirely new plan. Not one penny of investment in samples or goods required. No experience necessary. Our men are making big profits and have a permanent repeat order business. Address Hitchcock-Hill Co., Dept. 218, Chicago, Ill. Reference, any bank or Express Co.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—$250 IN GOLD, ALSO GOLD watches, diamond rings, bicycles and 101 other prizes make our great "Mystery" candy proposition the biggest winner ever known—the rapid fire seller and quick repeater. Clear $10 to $20 a day or more selling to candy, drug, dry goods stores, cigar stands, etc. Build a permanent paying business. Once in stock the dealer keeps on ordering to supply constant demand. Your profits continue. Ask us for particulars. Send no money. Write quick before territory is gone. CANDY CRAFT, Inc., Dept. 15, 229 W. Madison St., Chicago.

AGENTS—BEST SELLER; JEM RUBBER Repair for tires and tubes; supersedes vulcanization at a saving of over 80 per cent.; put it on cold, it vulcanizes itself in two minutes, and is guaranteed to last the life of the tire or tube; sells to every auto owner and accessory dealer. For particulars how to make big money and free sample, address Amazon Rubber Co., Philadelphia, Pa., Dept. 704.

$5 TO $10 A DAY EASILY MADE TAKING orders for our high grade laundry and toilet soaps, face creams, perfumes, flavoring extracts, spices, foods, 3 and 7 bar assorted toilet soap in fancy boxes, sell like hot cakes. Goods well known, nationally advertised. Big profits. Women and men everywhere make big money. Write quick for free catalog. Crofts & Reed Co., Dept. 89, Chicago, Ill.

CREW MANAGERS—AGENTS. OPALINE paintings are a knock-out. Make old territory new. Seasoned picture men double their sale. Beginners make $1.00 an hour and more with rigs. Greatest hit ever made. Samples and expense money furnished. Write today. Consolidated Portrait Co., Desk A-12, 1029 W. Adams St., Chicago.

NEWEST THING OUT—LITHOGRAM INItials for automobiles, motorcycles, canoes, golf sticks, tennis racquets, etc. Anyone can apply them in a jiffy. Sell to everybody. Set costs 15c. Brings $1.50. Fast sales and big daily profits for agents. Write for catalog. Lithogram Company, Desk 22, East Orange, N. J.

AGENTS WANTED TO SELL SURPLUS Army and Navy clothing, shoes and blankets direct to consumers. Small capital required. Wonderful opportunity for live wires. Write for particulars. U. S. Army & Navy Stores Co., 701 Broadway, Camden, N. J. Dept. S.

AGENTS: WE PAY $40 A WEEK TAKING orders for Parker Carburetor Perfector. Small device that fits any car, truck or tractor. Works automatically. Guaranteed in writing to add 40% more mileage or money back. Write quick for territory. Parker Mfg. Co., 109 Gay St., Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS—SELL RICH-LOOKING IMPORTed 36x68 rugs, $1 each. Carter, Tenn., sold 115 in four days. Profits, $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer selling plan; exclusive territory. Sample rug, prepaid, $1.39. E. H. Condon, Importer, Stonington, Maine.

SELL MINITMEND FOR TIRES AND tubes; cost 2c repair; surpasses vulcanizing; save 500 per cent; every auto and accessory dealer buys; profits amazing; Shaw made $21 first day; Hart $155 first week. Particulars and free sample. Continental Rubber Co., Desk 40, Philadelphia, Penn.

PORTRAIT AGENTS—I MADE $50,000 CANvassing for portr[illegible] I teach you free from "Good morning [illegible] to "Thank you, madam." Credit [illegible] t prices. Guarantee delivery. Fre[illegible] Profits in Portraits," explains all. [illegible] United Art Studio, Dept. 1, 127 N. D[illegible] ., Chicago.

AGENTS! HERE'S [illegible] G MONEY GETter. You give pa[illegible] ssmakers' shears free with each sale of [illegible] ning 7" at $1.50. Everybody buys, 100% p[illegible] $10-$20 daily profit. Particulars free. E. M. Davis, Dept. 409, Chicago.

WE START YOU IN BUSINESS, FURNISHing everything; men and women, $30.00 to $100.00 weekly operating our "New System Specialty Candy Factories" anywhere. Opportunity lifetime; booklet free. Z. Ragsdale Co., East Orange, N. J.

AGENTS! A SALE IN EVERY HOME FOR our beautiful dress goods, silks and general yard goods. Quick sales! Big profits! Large book of 1000 sample fabrics free to agents. Write today. National Importing & Mfg. Co., Dept. 16X, 425 Broadway, New York.

SALES AGENTS—A SALE IN EVERY home on our Newleather utility bag and waterproof apron. Something different. Big profits. We start you right. Improved Mfg. Co., Dept. 130, Ashland, Ohio.

AGENTS—LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS agents to sell hosiery, underwear, shirts, dresses, skirts, waists, shoes, clothing, etc. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 503 Broadway, New York.

$100 TO $500 MONTHLY DISTRIBUTING coffee; spare or full time. Guaranteed quality; sells less than retail. Experience unnecessary. Goldman Co., Dept. A, 340 River St., Chicago.

NEW INVENTION. OIL GAUGE FOR Fords. Sells on sight. Big profits. Small investment. Exclusive territory. Unusual opportunity for agents and salesmen. Address Sales Mgr., 314 Sta. C, Omaha, Nebr.

WE START YOU WITHOUT A DOLLAR—Soaps, extracts, perfumes, toilet goods. Experience unnecessary. Carnation Co., 126 Olive, St. Louis.

DOLLAR AN HOUR SURE. MEN, WOMEN, sell Menthol Ointment. Leave on trial. Trial is sale. Good side line. Credit and freight allowed. Sample free. Established 1865. Horner Manufacturing, 540, Pittsburgh, Pa.

SELFTHREADING NEEDLES AND NEEDLE books find a sale in every home. Fine side line. Easy to carry. Sample free. Needle Works, 143 E. 23d St., New York.

AGENTS—OUR SOAP AND TOILET ARticle plan is a wonder. Get our free sample case offer. Ho-Ro-Co., 125 Locust, St. Louis.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

AGENTS — I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

AGENTS—EVERY WOMAN WANTS JOLLY-Molly house dresses. Big profits. No capital needed. Commission advanced. Domestic Products Co., Davies Bldg. A., Dayton, O.

350% PROFIT SELLING KLEAN-RITE Magic Clothes Washing Wonder. Sells 25c. Profit 19c. Sample free. Bestever Products Co., 1941-L Irving Park, Chicago.

REMNANT STORE, CINCINNATI, O. GREATest dry goods bargains on earth. Agents wanted.

HELP WANTED

RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS WANTED BY U. S. Government. $135-$190 month. Steady work. Common education sufficient. List positions free. Write. Franklin Institute, Dept. M 26, Rochester, N. Y.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

BIG MONEY MADE SILVERING MIRRORS, metal plating, refinishing. Outfits furnished. Y. Decie Laboratories, 286 Fifth Avenue, New York.

STEADY WORK, HIGH WAGES, ANYwhere. Men or women send your address; hurry! W. M. O. Service, 3108 Canal St., Chicago.

MALE HELP WANTED

WANTED—1500 RAILWAY TRAFFIC INspectors; no experience; train for this profession thru sparetime, home-study; easy terms; $110 to $200 monthly and expenses guaranteed, or money back. Outdoors; local or traveling; under big men who reward ability. Get free booklet CM-12, Stand. Business Training Inst., Buffalo, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE, EXCELLENT OPPORtunity to earn big money, travel, thousands of dollars offered in rewards, established 1909, particulars free. Write to C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BAGGAGEMEN, $140-$200; colored porters by railroads everywhere. Experience unnecessary. 686 Ry. Bureau, East St. Louis, Ills.

DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY. TRAVEL. Great demand everywhere. Experience unnecessary. Particulars free. Write, American Detective System, 1968 Broadway, New York.

SPLENDID CLERICAL WORK OPPORtunity. Spare or whole time. No canvassing, good money. Chautauqua Business Builders, Jamestown, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE—BIG PAY. TRAVEL. Don't pay $15 to $25 for correspondence courses. Our instruction book, 20 lessons, only $2. United Sales Co., B288, Springfield, Ill.

MEN—AGE 17 TO 45. EXPERIENCE UNnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, report. Salaries; expenses. American-Foreign Detective Agency, 126, St. Louis.

BE A DETECTIVE, $50-$100 WEEKLY; travel over world; experience unnecessary. American Detective Agency, 1000 Lucas, St. Louis.

MEN WANTED, BECOME AUTO EXPERTS. $45 week. Learn while earning. Franklin Institute, Dept. M 404, Rochester, N. Y.

MEN WANTED FOR DETECTIVE WORK. Experience unnecessary. Write J. Ganor, former U. S. Govt. detective. 100 St. Louis.

BECOME A DETECTIVE IN YOUR TOWN. Experience unnecessary. National Detective Agency, 723, Youngstown, Ohio.

BECOME DETECTIVE — BIG PAY; EASY work; free particulars. Captain Wagner, 186 E. 79th, New York.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

WANTED, WOMEN—BECOME DRESS DEsigners. $35 week. Learn while earning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. M505, Rochester, N. Y.

EARN MONEY ADDRESSING, MAILING circulars. Instructions 12c. Palace Mailing Co., Toledo, Ohio.

MALE AND FEMALE HELP WANTED

CLERKS (MEN AND WOMEN), OVER 17, for postal mail service. $120 month. Examinations June-July. Experience unnecessary. For free particulars of instruction, write J. Leonard (former Civil Service examiner), 1067 Equitable Bldg., Washington, D. C.

SONG POEMS WANTED

YOU WRITE WORDS FOR A SONG—WE write the music, publish, and secure a copyright. Submit poems on any subject. The Metropolitan Studios, 914 S. Michigan Ave., Dept. 212, Chicago, Illinois.

UNDERGROUND TREASURES

UNDERGROUND TREASURES—HOW AND where to find them; particulars for 2c. Model Co., Como Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

MICHIGAN FARM LANDS FOR SALE

GET A PLACE OF YOUR OWN! YOU CAN. We help you. Choice farm land only $15 to $30 per acre on easy terms. Healthful climate, good water, roads, neighbors, markets, R. R. Full information in big free booklet. Send for it now. Swigart, X-1245, First Nat'l Bank Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

FOR SALE

MAKE MONEY. 52 WAYS TO MAKE money only $1. Hurry. Get them today. General Supply Company, Box 82, Huntington, Indiana.

MISSOURI LAND

MISSOURI—$5 DOWN AND $5 MONTHLY buys 40 acres truck and poultry land near town Southern Mo. Price $200. Send for bargain list. Box 35 A, Mt. Vernon, Ill.

FARM WANTED

WANTED TO HEAR FROM OWNER OF A farm or good land for sale for fall delivery. L. Jones, Box 692, Olney, Ill.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

DON'T INVEST IN OIL BEFORE YOU read The Texas Investor. Knowledge is power. As an experienced operator, in my weekly magazine, I give you facts and information that you positively cannot afford to be without. A few dollars invested right and at the right time can do more than thousands invested thoughtlessly. My new syndicate plan of handling valuable leases in richest oil field in the world is placing those who are co-operating with me in line for tremendous profits. Write for trial subscription free. C. C. Cannan, 640 Cannan Bldg, Houston, Texas.

$5,000 YEARLY INCOME PAID THOUsands of people who invested in Texas oil lands. They made the start. $2 may start you making $200 monthly, possibly more. You get warranty deed to land with interest in well and participating interest in entire subdivision. Results count. Bank reference, established facts free. Write today. Sourlake Texas Oil Co., 611 Demenil, St. Louis, Mo.

WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO MEN with Ford cars to demonstrate "Napco" Automatic Moisture System—50% more mileage guaranteed—more power, speed and "pep." Our representatives literally coining money. Write today for particulars. Napco, 1907 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, O.

OIL—$5 MONTHLY GETS DEED TO LAND and interest in wells that may get $500 for every $5 invested. Write Bennett Co-Operative Co., 312 1st Nat'l Bank Bldg., Houston, Texas.

SUCCESSFUL SPECULATION IN STOCK or grain. $2 invested monthly should pay back $100 for each $2 invested. Write for particulars. Provident Company, 513 Mercantile Building, Denver, Colorado.

FREE MAP, TRANS-PECOS OIL FIELDS, Texas. Latest gusher field. Wonderful opportunity. Write for free map & information. Schimmel Co., Suite 585, 408 Burkburnett Bldg., Fort Worth, Texas.

AN INITIAL INVESTMENT OF FIVE DOLlars may make you rich. Secured by deed to land and interest in oil wells. Write me at once for full particulars. M. F. Hinckley, Beatty Bldg., Houston, Texas, Dept. A.

WOULD YOU INVEST $10.00 IN A TEXAS oil field business chance of making $5,000? Particulars free. Warren, 718½ Ohio, Wichita Falls, Tex.

TEXAS OIL MAP FREE. WRITE TODAY. West Columbia Syndicate, 716 Binz Bldg., Houston, Texas.

TRICKS—GAMES

MAGIC GOODS. BOOKS, CARDS, LODEstone tricks. Catalog free. B. L. Smith Co., Newark, Mo.

MEDICAL

SICK? TRY RADIUM-ENERGY AS APplied through Degnen's Radio-Active Solar Pad; guaranteed; liberal trial period given; remarkable success in constipation, rheumatism, abnormal blood pressure, stomach, heart, liver, kidneys; no matter what your ailment, try it at our risk; write today. Radium Appliance Co., 619 Bradbury Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif.

TO SUFFERING MEN AND WOMEN. IF you have lame back, failing memory, loss of ambition, despondency, unfitting you for the ordinary duties of life; or if afflicted with any chronic nervous, kidney or bladder disease. Remember; we are specialists in these diseases. Write; book symptom blank and advice free. Dr. Meyers, 316 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

WE WANT MEN SUFFERING FROM ANY weakness, chronic, nervous, skin, kidney or bladder disease to write us for free advice. Interesting book, symptom blank and advice free, sealed. Dr. Ries Company, Suite 210 & 211, Baltimore Building, St. Paul, Minn.

KEEP COOL, ED'S ROCHELL SALT COMpound Tablets, 10, 25, 50c. Andula Medicine Co., Troy, N. Y.

PILES—CURED OR NO PAY; $2.00 IF cured. Remedy sent on trial. Kuro Remedy Company, Kansas City, Mo.

PHONOGRAPH RECORDS EXCHANGED

YOUR VICTOR-COLUMBIA RECORDS safely exchanged by mail for other selections. Cost trifling. Write for circular. Record Exchange, 566 Nostrand Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

PERSONAL

MARRY; HUNDREDS CHARMING, wealthy people desire early marriage. Particulars free, in plain sealed envelope. Janet Sprague, L-Box 343, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

OVERSTOUT? REDUCE STEADILY, BEcome slender, attractive, win admirers. Get Korein tabules, any druggist; or write for free brochure to Korein Co., NF-473, Station X, New York.

MARRY. MANY WEALTHY. BEST, MOST successful; quickest results. Write, be convinced. Descriptions free. Mrs. Budd, Box 753, San Francisco, California.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

NOTICE—A LARGE COLLECTION OF PICtures and descriptions of beautiful ladies sent free to any one upon request. Address Prof. Ward, B 520, Valley, Nebr.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; description and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 31, Kansas City, Mo.

SORE LEGS WILL HEAL UNDER ANTI-Flamma Poultice Plaster. Describe case and get free sample. Bayles Distributing Co., 1856 Grand Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY, BEST, LARGEST, ESTABLISHED 16 years. Thousands wealthy members. Old Reliable Club. Mrs. Wrubel, Box 26, Oakland, Calif.

MARRIAGE PAPER — FREE — BEST IN America; thousands seek marriage; many rich. Southern Agency, Montgomery, Alabama.

ANY HEALTHY GIRL WRITE BISHOP, 498½ Felix, St. Joseph, Mo.

PERSONAL—(Continued)

MEN—NO MATTER WHAT YOU HAVE tried or how old your case our tablet preparation rapidly overcomes all such conditions; it gives greater strength, restores in less time and at less cost than anything under the sun. The tablet with the wonderful reputation. $1 per box, 4 for $3. Crown Drug Co., Dept. A, Station E, Box 50, Toledo, Ohio.

SUFFERERS FROM NERVOUS, WEAK, run down condition should take Juven Pills. They accomplish marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1, by C. I. Hood Co., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, Lowell, Mass. (Z.R.)

MEN—OUR TREATMENT NEVER FAILS TO restore strength to those troubled with nervous, weak, run-down and despondent conditions that undermine good health. Costs nothing if not cured. Write for free book. Cumberland Chemical Co., 32 Berry Block, Nashville, Tenn.

MEN WHO ARE LOSING OUT IN LIFE CAN find a marvelous remedy and complete restoration in 808 Tablets—the wonderful 48-hour medicine. Different from anything ever heard of. Holds world's record. $1 per box. Particulars and wonderful testimonials free. 808 Chemical Co., Dept. G, Pittsburg, Kan.

MARRY. THOUSANDS CONGENIAL PEOple, worth from $1,000 to $50,000 seeking early marriage;. descriptions, photos, introductions free. Sealed. Either sex. Send no money. Address Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Ill.

HAIR GROWN ON BALD HEADS WHERE there are fine fuzzy roots $10.00. Superfluous hair removed forever $5.00. Satisfaction or money back. Knapp Trio, 378A Pleasant Ave., St. Paul, Minn. References Commercial State Bank.

THOUSANDS ANXIOUS TO MARRY. WORTH to $100,000. Confidential descriptions free in plain sealed envelope. Satisfaction guaranteed. Long established, reliable, trustworthy. Peoples Club, Box 94, Los Angeles, California.

MEN ON THE DOWN GRADE, REMEMBER we cure chronic, nervous, kidney, bladder diseases. Why not have the best treatment? Book symptom blank and advice free. Hinze Medical Institute, 22 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

BE WISE—READ OUR NEW BOOK, "MODern Matrimony," for real scientific information about marriage, modern sex problems, etc. Disperses ignorance of sex and nature's laws. Price $1.00 postpaid. Modern Pub. Co., Box 482, Los Angeles, Cal.

WOMEN — ERGOIL SAFELY RELIEVES. No harm or inconvenience with work. Results guaranteed or money refunded. Prepaid, $1.25. Dermitone Remedy Co., Dept. 4, 127 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

JOIN OUR LONESOME CLUB! RICH, poor, young, old. Enclose stamped envelope. Box 749, Chicago.

MARRY! FREE DIRECTORY WITH DEscriptions and photos. Bonafide Co., Dept. 5, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—GIRL, 19, HAS $25,000; WIDOW, 36, worth $40,000; hundreds wealthy. List for stamp. Sunflower Club, Cimarron, Kansas.

GET MARRIED — BEST MATRIMONIAL paper published. Free for stamp. Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

CATHOLICS, WISHING TO MARRY, PARticulars free. Address Home Club, L-Box 23, Grand Rapids, Mich.

LADIES DESIRING HUSBAND OF WEALTH and health, write Box 38, Station H, Cleveland, Ohio.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE: BEST PUBLIcation for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency, 65 Bridgeport, Connecticut.

IF YOU WANT HEALTHY, WEALTHY, loving wife, write Violet Rays, Dennison, Ohio, enclosing stamped envelope.

MARRY RICH; PAPER WITH HUNDREDS names, addresses, descriptions, 25c. "Sealed." Box 3317B, Boston, Mass.

WEALTHY BACHELOR, 32, WANTS TO marry. R-Box 432, League, Columbus, Ohio.

LADY FARM OWNER, 49, WORTH $50,000, wants husband. A-Box 1134, League, Detroit, Mich.

WHY NOT MARRY? ONE DOLLAR BRINGS you over 200 ladies' addresses. The National Bureau, 2214 N. Halsted St., Chicago, Ill.

LOVING LITTLE LADY OF CONSIDERABLE wealth will marry. Box 55, Oxford, Fla.

WIDOWER, 45, WITH $30,000, WANTS wife. D-Box 325, Club, Fort Wayne, Ind.

LADY, 36, WORTH $50,000, WOULD MARRY. S-Box 35, League, Toledo, Ohio.

MISSING PERSONS

A department devoted to aiding readers of the Blade and Ledger in finding lost persons.

In sending information to the Missing Persons Department for publication in the Blade and Ledger, please write the information in the following order:

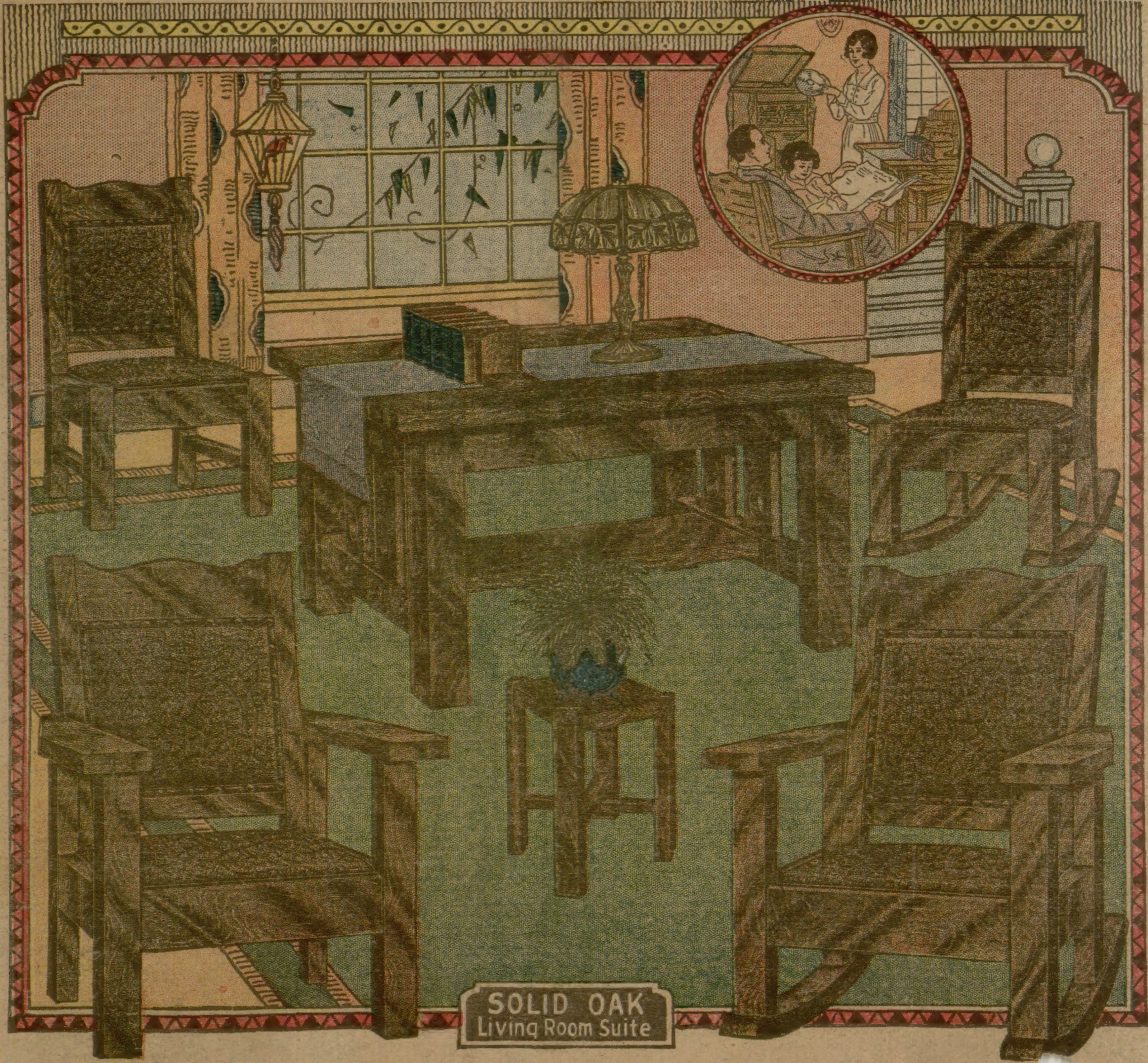
1, your name; 2, your address; 3, relation, if any, to lost person; 4, lost person's name; 5, age; 6, where last heard from; 7, when last heard from; 8, occupation, if any; 9, description.

Our rate for inserting notice will be $1 for 35 words and 10c for every additional word in excess of 35. To reproduce a photograph there will be an extra charge of $1.

Address Lost Persons Editor, W. D. Boyce Co., 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

Mrs. Florence Castle, Conneaut, Ohio, wishes to hear from, or concerning her daughter, Edith Seeley, 17 years old. Last heard from in Children's Home, on Dec. 29, 1916. Kind of short and fat; brown curly hair, eyes light brown.

Mrs. O. E. Gossett, Gastonia, N. C., wishes to hear from, or concerning son, Clyde Sides, 20 years old. Last heard from in San Francisco, Cal., last March. He is 6 feet tall; weight, 155 lbs.; dark hair, blue eyes, slim, and has a few freckles.



$1 Brings Hartman's Elegant 7-piece [illegible]ite

Richly Upholstered Backs and Seats, Beautiful New Design

Hartman's latest offering in Mission furniture. A new design in a 7-piece suite—elegant, massive, yet graceful. Both chairs and rockers have **upholstered seats and backs.** Without doubt the greatest bargain in Mission furniture. Sent for only $1.00 down and on 30 days' free trial. Then, if not satisfied, send it back and we will refund the $1 and pay freight both ways. If you keep it, pay balance, only $3 monthly—over a year to pay.

Take Over a Full Year to Pay

This splendid suite consists of large Arm Rocker, Arm Chair, Sewing Rocker, Side Chair, Library Table, Tabourette and Book Blocks—all **beautifully finished, fumed in a rich shade of brown,** neatly waxed. Very massive and **well braced**—very durable. Rocker and chair seats and backs are richly upholstered in imitation Spanish brown leather, **well padded for comfort.** Rears of backs are **also upholstered with same material as front.** Any way you look at them, these chairs and rockers have an elegant, finished appearance. Chairs and tables move easily, because they are set on **"domes of silence."** Rocker and Arm Chair about 36 in. high and have seats 19x19 inches. Backs 22 inches from seat. Sewing Rocker and Side Chair about 34 inches high, seats 16x16 inches, backs 21 inches from seat.

Upholstered Seats and Backs—Wonderfully Finished

Extra Large Table Library Table is extra large, top being 24x36 inches and 30 inches from floor; legs 2 inches square. Neat paneled ends and roomy bookshelf. Tabourette top, 10x10 in. Height 16 in. Book blocks large and heavy enough to support a number of books. We can't say too much for this splendid set. Try it 30 days FREE.

Shipped without delay (fully boxed, "knocked down" to save freight) from Chicago warehouse or factory in Indiana. Shipping weight about 180 pounds.

Order No. 110CMA15. Price, $39.95. Pay only $1 down. Balance $3.00 monthly.

HARTMAN'S
1921
CATALOG
PRICES
SMASHED
Not Merely Reduced

FREE *Bargain Catalog*

392 Page Book FREE

The great free 392-page Catalog shows you how to make your home beautiful and how to save money. It offers you the choicest styles and amazing bargains in furniture, rugs, linoleum, stoves, watches, silverware, dishes, washing machines, sewing machines, aluminum ware, phonographs, gas engines and cream separators, etc.—all on our easy monthly payment terms. 30 days' free trial on everything. Get this FREE bargain catalog.

Post card or letter brings it by return mail.

"Let Hartman Feather Your Nest."

HARTMAN FURNITURE & CARPET CO.

3913 Wentworth Avenue Copyrighted, 1921, by Hartman's, Chicago **Dept. 3388 Chicago, Illinois**

HARTMAN Furniture & Carpet Co.
3913 Wentworth Avenue Dept. 3388 Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed find $1.00. Send the 7-Piece Living Room Suite No. 110CMA15 as described. I am to have 30 days' trial. If not satisfied will ship it back and you will refund my $1 and pay freight both ways. If I keep it, I will pay $3 per month until the price, $39.95, is paid.

Name……………………………………
Address……………………………………
R. F. D.…………………………… Box No.……………
Town…………………………… State……………